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DEMOCRACY AND "NATIONAL UNITY"

MR. CHURCHILL'S remark about the need for maintaining national political unity after the war during a period of reconstruction raises a question of far-reaching importance. Mr. Attlee's reference to the necessary return to party divisions at some undefined date was not a retort to Mr. Churchill. Indeed, the circumstances are unforeseeable. Where we can be clear to-day is that a sane peace cannot follow a khaki election, nor will the influence of people of good will function in a chaotic Europe, if at the same time the social struggle in Britain is at its height. In a recent speech Mr. Attlee declared that a proper standard of nutrition for all, the abolition of the idle rich and of the idle poor, and a fairer distribution of wealth and of educational opportunity must all become national policy, and be generally accepted as the basis of our social order after the war. But, let us be clear, if the same elements that were in charge from 1918–19 are also in power at the end of this war, we shall find that none of these fine aspirations, so easy to form as post-war ideals, is actually carried out, and we may again see our own Government turning against these very social forces whose opposition to the Nazis has enabled us to win the war. It is on their growth and enthusiasm that the hope of a saner Europe depends. The only solution for this problem is to lay the foundation during the war itself of the new order of which Mr. Attlee speaks. Without war aims that include such a social programme, it is useless to talk of maintaining national unity. As Mr. Priestley urged in his admirable postscript last Sunday, it is not enough to say that we shall win the war, to praise ourselves as fine fellows, and to denounce Hitler and Mussolini as blackguards. The first of war aims is to build an England of which common people can feel proud. This week a vast new addition to the Army is announced. How is this army to be used? Is it to co-operate with revolutionary forces on the Continent, and, if so, are we doing our best to create these forces? And for what kind of England will it fight?

One of the difficulties of "national unity" are sharply illustrated by the case of the *Daily Worker*. Freedom can only exist where there is agreement about certain fundamentals. A party which not merely criticises and demands social change, but deliberately attempts to undermine resistance at a time when the country is overwhelmingly united in its determination to resist an enemy which would for generations trample on its freedom, may be said to "ask for" suppression. Mr. Morrison made a fair point in the House of Commons when he urged the hypocrisy of Communist appeals on the ground of freedom; they believe neither in tolerance nor in freedom. That, however, is no reply to other people who do believe in freedom and who see grave dangers in Mr. Morrison's action. The Home Secretary scouted the analogy of France. True, it must not be pressed too far, but it is highly relevant as a warning. We object to the suppression of the *Daily Worker* under the summary powers of Regulation 2D, which were only granted to Sir John Anderson on the plea that it might be necessary in the case of an actual invasion; the use of such a summary method threatens all freedom and has the disadvantage of misleading many people, whose political memories are short, about the real reasons for the action taken. Communist agitation is now attempting to persuade people that the Communists, and not Mr. Churchill or the Labour Party, are our real defenders against the Nazis. A public trial would have finally exposed the real line of Communist propaganda. We object to the summary suppression of the *Daily Worker* because it is the first step in what may easily prove a highly dangerous descent into a policy of repression, which enables a Minister to forget that the only real answer to Communism is to provide for society that basis of social justice which is the demand of millions of people who are not Communists. The whole Communist case rests on the assumption that capitalism, however progressive, can never grant a decent life to the masses, and never organise society so that war is not a recurrent phenomenon. Ultimately, the only answer to the Communist is to show that capitalism can be transformed peacefully even in a democracy such as ours is to-day.

Mr. Paterson's Achievement

Facts about conditions of internment in Canada, hitherto scarce and unreliable, are now available as a result of the return to England of three hundred refugees. They speak with unanimity and enthusiasm about Mr. Alexander Paterson, who was sent by Mr. Herbert Morrison to Canada to clear up the internment muddle there. Mr. Paterson appears to have interviewed personally, without the presence or intervention of Canadian officials, every internee who wished to return to England, and to have treated all applications with imagination and common sense, besides finding time in the midst of this considerable task to visit Washington and Ottawa in an effort to clear up the confusion that has so far prevented the consideration in Canada of applications for visas for the U.S.A. The result of his efforts is the arrival of a first transport containing some 100 volunteers for the Pioneer Corps, about 50 other men released under various categories, and about 130 others who are understood to be detained in Huyton for " further examination." Some others it is understood are likely to be given freedom in the U.S.A. This journal has strongly criticised the Home Office for its handling of the refugee problem; we are glad at last to be able to strike a different note.

A Case for Publicity

On October 28th, 1940, a War Office Court of Inquiry concluded its investigations into an alleged case of shocking brutality in a military camp near Liverpool where a number of conscientious objectors were stationed. The allegations were fully reported in this and some other newspapers and an inquiry was demanded in the House of Commons. Exactly three months later, on January 28th, 1941, the Minister for War stated that an officer and six N.C.O.s are to be court-martialled as a result of the inquiry. As a matter of discipline this is the affair of the War Office. But from the point of view of the public it is surely of importance that the report should be made public. During these three months the matter has been *sub judice*. It is so no longer. If the courts-martial imply that the allegations were accurate, then more than the misconduct of certain individuals is involved. The question is then how to prevent conditions in which these alleged Dachau methods were possible. If the allegations are not true, it is only fair to the Unit and Commanding Officer that this should be known.

Economic Notes (*by an Industrial Correspondent*)

There has now been time for second thoughts about last week's man-power debate in Parliament. But it is still not at all easy to say how much is likely to happen as a result of the changes in policy then announced by Bevin and Churchill. Some things are all to the good. It is, for example, an enormous gain for common sense that the rate at which men are henceforth to be called up for the Army will be definitely related to the actual progress made in the supply of munitions and other equipment—including, of course, imports from the United States as well as our own output. This is so obviously right that it is difficult to understand why the principle was not definitely adopted long ago, instead of what was actually done—the making of related plans for calling-up and for production, and then a failure to keep the two plans in step after they had been initially approved. A second clear gain is that exemption from military service is no longer to be based on occupation alone, but on the actual work a man is engaged in. The Schedule of Protected Occupations was a good enough approximation at the beginning of the war: indeed, it worked quite well for a time. But now that man-power is actually very short it is absurd to go on exempting men who are in fact doing quite unimportant work, or even unemployed, while men engaged in much more important jobs are taken away. Of course, the new method involves more complications, and there must be more attention to individual cases.

* * *

I am much less satisfied with what was said in the debate about compulsion, I am not at all clear how it is going to be worked. Power is to be taken—or rather more power, for some power already exists—to sack inefficient managements and replace them by nominees of the supply departments. But this power is most unlikely to be used except in extreme cases; and it does not at all meet the main point at which I believe compulsion is needed upon the employer. What is really needed is power to ignore wherever it seems desirable the boundaries between firms, and to group or amalgamate businesses into units more suitable for war purposes. There ought to be no obstacles in the way of moving machines from one factory to another, irrespective of their peace time ownership. There ought to be uniformity of working conditions, as well as wage-rates, over wide areas; so that men could be sent from one factory to another without any question of changes in their conditions of employment. If all the contractors in a town engaged on munitions were pooled into a single firm for war purposes, a large part of the problem of industrial compulsion would disappear; for a man could be moved as easily from factory to factory within the area as he can now from shop to shop within a single establishment. The problem of moving men from one district to another would be simplified if there were uniformity of conditions as well as wage-rates in each district.

* * *

Inter-district movement of labour is, of course, the really difficult problem that now faces us. The difficulty is largely due to very bad planning at an earlier stage—to the siting of new and enlarged factories without any regard at all to the availability of labour. There will have to be a huge migration of workers into certain parts of the country during the next few months—of unskilled as well as of skilled workers; and this movement will be largely into areas which are already full up, or more than full up, by normal standards of housing accommodation. Workers will, therefore, be reluctant to move; and it may well be that compulsory powers will be needed even more in the case of unskilled and women workers than of skilled men. But will people put up with this sort of compulsion? I doubt if they will, unless it is applied very carefully and considerately, or unless the workers are convinced that the employer also is being effectively ordered about in the national interest.

* * *

Probably the best way, as things are, will be to form holding companies including all the firms in the trades which are undergoing contraction, to use these companies for the purpose of concentrating the work on a few factories and compensating the owners of the works which are closed down, and then either to use the closed works as munition factories or for training or to move any suitable machinery out of them to where it is wanted for war use, especially on training. If this were done, and if the big contractors were taken over by the State, lock, stock and barrel, we should be well on the way to solving the man-power problem, not without some compulsion, but without forms of compulsion which are likely to provoke serious resentment among large bodies of people—not only among existing factory workers, but even more among people not now in industry who will have to be brought in to supplement the present supply.

* * *

The problems I have been discussing in these notes matter very much more than the form of organisation which is used for mobilising the nation's war effort in this coming phase. I think the methods of organisation are still bad—not much better than they were before the last fortnight's changes. But the forms matter very much less than the substance. The things to shout at are not so much the failure to recognise the need for a real Minister of Production as the mess that is still being made over training, billeting, and the movement of labour, the refusal to commandeer and take over completely the main contracting firms, and the continued entrenchment in the Ministry of Supply of " Controls " dominated and officered by the great capitalist combines. I wish the Labour critics of the Government in last week's debate had followed up Mr. Shinwell and spent more effort on these aspects of the matter. I wish too, they would concentrate less on the dangers of applying compulsion to labour, and more on the need of applying it to employers. They are still being allowed to manage their own separate businesses without any real overriding of the separateness of each capitalist firm, or any recognition of the need to ignore the peacetime ownership of factories or machines. The whole supply of plant and equipment should be treated as unreservedly available for maximising the war effort. I also wish the representatives of the Labour Party spent less time on sketching rosy pictures of the future wonders to come, and insisted on those changes of the economic and social structure which would not only implement some of the long run demands of Labour (pooling and control of transport, coal, etc.), but which are also imperative for an effective war-economic organisation. It is not by resisting compulsion on individuals, but by making it as unnecessary as possible that a progressive programme for war and post-war can be put into effect.

Parliamentary Notes *(From a Parliamentary Correspondent)*

Bob Boothby was generally liked both in the Chamber and in the Smoke Room. He admitted folly but denied guilt. This the House seemed to accept, but, as the Prime Minister said, so high a standard is expected from Members that the punishment of faults must be the more severe. Walter Elliot movingly expressed the feelings of the House. He hoped Boothby would realise "the past is past, to-morrow is also a day."

In the *Daily Worker* debate Aneurin Bevan led the attack. Though opposed to the policy of the *Daily Worker*, he objected to its suppression on grounds of expediency. He did not demand absolute liberty. Indeed, "the minority has no right to withhold the instruments of effective action from the majority." The minority has the right to carry on propaganda against the majority, but not to act against its will. What real influence had the *Daily Worker*, since it could not undermine morale even under intensive bombing? The results in America of suppression by the Government would be deplorable. The Americans saw in its publication and in the People's Convention proof that Britain at war was a real democracy in action. Why deprive ourselves of this precious asset? If there were a case against the *Daily Worker*, why not openly state it? The Government had missed the opportunity of an effective answer to the Communist case, which would now be furtively put about. People would believe that the paper was suppressed because its point of view was unpopular with the Government.

"Where," he asked, "does the Home Secretary propose to stop, now that he has started down the slippery slope of suppression? The next move of the Communists will be to hold hundreds of meetings. Is he going to suppress them? If so, we will need a Gestapo in Britain. Why not specify the charges and take the paper to court? Then there can be no come-back."

As a result of this action, the position of every newspaper to-day was precarious. Mr. Attlee had told the *Daily Mirror* and *Sunday Pictorial*, which both supported the war, that their political line was subversive without specifying the charge at a time when they were strongly demanding changes in the Cabinet. Now the threat of suppression hangs over every editorial chair in Fleet Street. This will prevent the free expression of views because every newspaper now knows that, once suppressed, it cannot state its case. Bevan finally charged the Government with breaking faith with the House. The Government had asked for Regulation 2D, when danger of invasion was imminent, to replace the more cumbersome procedure of warning first and then action in the courts.

Lees-Smith completely disregarded the arguments already brought forward. Gallacher's speech was really irrelevant, because he set out to prove that the aim of the *Daily Worker* had been to build up morale by airing grievances and so bringing about their redress! Shelter committees, the use of tubes and tunnels, all advocated by it, had now been adopted. Sabotage was a crime that no Communist would countenance. Sir Percy Harris, who seconded the official amendment, did so without surrendering his principles. It was bad for democracy if special powers could be used to close down the press. He had a prejudice for taking such action through a court of law. If the Government had prosecuted, the result would have been the same as now attained by summary action. At one of the most critical moments in the country's history, he was not prepared to vote against the Government, but he wished the Home Secretary to explain why, at this particular moment, he needed these summary powers. Pritt made too long a speech and was very rude to interrupters. Ninety per cent. of Members had never seen the *Daily Worker*, and didn't want to. It had criticised mistakes and given voice to grievances.

Morrison replied to the debate in swinging style that carried most of the House with him. Bevan wanted democracy for himself but not for others. Gallacher had demanded the suppression of Fascist marches in the East End. Pritt was the exponent of the administration of law by the executive. He denied that he was biased by his long opposition to Communism in making his decision or that we were following in the tragic footsteps of France. We were still in danger of invasion and the procedure through the courts was too slow and ineffective under present conditions. These powers, he assured the House, would not be used to stop the press criticising the Government, but solely when attempts were made to sabotage the war effort. The press was protected, because, when exercising them, he would have to stand trial before the House.

Bevan's motion secured 8 supporters with 323 against, and some abstentions. During the coming months, those who genuinely believe in free speech will have to be ceaselessly alert.

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THE ITALIAN COLLAPSE

To Italians who pass through the Forum as they go about their daily tasks the monumental map that shows the growth of the Roman Empire must tell an ironical tale. It is unwise to boast in stone. It was only last month that General Wavell began his offensive and to-day that Empire is in dissolution. We have learnt enough in this war about fortune and destiny to write and think about any local campaign with reserve. The last word about the future of Africa will be spoken not in the Mediterranean, but in the Atlantic and the North Sea. Everyone understands that if Hitler could crush us in this island he could win back Italian Africa with a stroke of the pen, though it does not follow that he would restore it to Mussolini. But while we pay that debt to sobriety and realism, the events of the past fortnight make it fairly clear that the Italian armies are nowhere capable of any formidable resistance. They evacuated Kassala without an attempt to hold it, and our pursuing forces are already before Agordat, the railhead of the line that leads to Massowah. Eritrea is their oldest colony and its natives have usually fought well under Italian officers, yet a stout defence seems as unlikely here as in Libya. Italians have that type of quick intelligence which is unfavourable to a stubborn defensive: they know when they are beaten. Cut off from supplies and reinforcements by the closing of the Suez Canal, they had only one hope of maintaining themselves in Eritrea, Abyssinia and Somaliland. Their fate depended on Graziani's invasion of Egypt. If he could have used his superior numbers to occupy Egypt and seize the Canal, these remote colonies could have been provisioned and held. As things stand to-day, they were doomed when Graziani's Libyan army collapsed. It is easy to imagine the state of mind of these Italian armies which retreat with a minimum of resistance. It is possible that they are short of oil and other imported stores: their planes are obsolete and their pilots hopelessly outmatched. In these conditions they are doubtless asking each other round every mess-table whether any useful end can be served by an obstinate and bloody resistance. Since their confidence in their leaders, in the Duce and probably in the régime itself, is shaken, they are likely to answer that question, as their comrades in Libya did, in the negative. Where they can surrender to British or South African troops, they are likely to seek that easy way of escape from a war that must seem already lost.

The case of the Italian armies in Abyssinia is somewhat different. They also know, as they survey their dwindling stores, that they cannot be relieved or reinforced. But they face an enemy whom they have exasperated by every device of systematic cruelty. We have at last done for these revolted Abyssinian patriots and their Emperor what we ought to have done for them in their sore ordeal five years ago: we have given them some modern arms and some training in their use. But these tribesmen are not a regular, disciplined army; they are guerillas, who will hunt down scattered bodies of Italians and surprise their outposts. It will be a war of extermination and though it can end only in one way, it may last longer, since the Italians will be fighting for their lives. But if the whole country rises behind the Emperor, as it seems to be doing, it is possible that the Italians will not try to hold Addis Ababa and other strong points indefinitely: they may eventually withdraw to the coast, where they could surrender to British troops.

These flattering anticipations assume that German help has come too late and that it cannot be decisive. But it would be foolish to under-rate it. So far as we certainly know it is confined as yet to the air force established in Sicily. It performed a brilliant feat when it attacked our convoy and its escort in the Sicilian Channel and inflicted on it the loss of a cruiser, with heavy damage to the carrier *Illustrious*. It has since visited Malta, and that much enduring island does not laugh at German bombers as it did at the Italians. On the other side of the account these daring dive-bombers have suffered heavy losses in their turn and their base at Catania has been crippled, though doubtless only for a time. How much more might this German air force achieve? It might attempt to capture Malta by landing airborne troops. It will doubtless try to make the Sicilian Channel so dangerous for our ships that it can no longer be used as our customary sea-road: the astonishing thing is that it has been so used. They may also facilitate the despatch of reinforcements and stores by sea or air to Marshal Graziani, or his successor, in Tripoli. At the worst this would not greatly impede General Wavell's operations against Cyrenaica, but it might cause him to pause before he carried his attack much beyond its isolated plateau against Tripoli and the western regions of Libya. But we are not inclined to rate very high the chance that the Germans can in this way alter the outlook in

Libya gravely to our disadvantage. Our command of the sea and the air never did suffice to isolate Tripoli. It could always be reinforced by means of Italian supply ships which crossed the channel at its narrowest by night and then crept down the coast of Tunisia within the three-mile limit. But what would be really serious would be the acquisition by the Germans and Italians of Bizerta. If they held this great French naval port, they could finally close the Sicilian Channel and compel us to rely on the roundabout Cape route. Rumour has it that a demand for the use of Bizerta has been addressed to Vichy. Other reports describe large German troop movements in Italy and Sicily, and suggest that Hitler may contemplate a coup in North Africa if Petain is stubborn.

Our belief is that the other channel for German aid to Italy has now been closed. There will be no march through Bulgaria—probably because Russia has put her veto upon it. What she will not tolerate now she is not likely to tolerate in spring. It was not that she felt any sympathy for the Greeks, and still less for us. But the prospect of the establishment of German armies so uncomfortably near the Dardanelles alarmed her, and in effect she has forbidden it. Her method was, if we may trust American correspondents who are usually well-informed, to inform Berlin that the trade deal concluded by M. Molotov would not be ratified unless she had an assurance that Bulgaria's frontiers will be respected. We are not so simple-minded as to trust any assurance of this kind, nor do we suppose that the Berlin-Moscow trade deal is in itself of vital importance to the Germans. But they will not risk antagonising the Russians on a matter which Stalin regards as a vital national interest. We do not suppose that he would have risked war even for the Straits, but it is fairly certain that he would have encouraged the Turks to resist and might have helped them by the full technique of "non-intervention." That is a complication which Hitler's soldiers will be in no hurry to risk. Russia has at her disposal many ways of making herself unpleasant. That she resents the scale of the German occupation of Rumania is clear. There is still obscurity about the civil war between the Iron Guard, or part of it, and General Antonescu. The statement that Communists have penetrated the Iron Guard may be only an excuse for executing them. Stalin will obstruct, though he may not directly resist, a German conquest of the Balkans.

What meanwhile is happening in Italy? Has the military collapse begun to endanger the Fascist régime? We wish we could believe the stories of serious rioting in Milan and Turin. They come from American journalists trained in an accurate school, but though we can believe that the régime has lost the obedience of the masses in Northern Italy, we cannot suppose that it has had to call in German troops to police Milan. That would, indeed, be the end of Mussolini. It has not yet come to this pass, nor is it likely that the leaders of the underground opposition would so act as to provoke German intervention at this stage. But it is morally impossible that the civilian population at home can be any keener about this war than the conscripts who surrender so readily in Libya. They have lost their faith that "the Duce is always right," and when the defeat of the Duce's master is in sight we do not doubt that they will rise. But that happy hour is not yet. What is very clear, is that with American help we should be making our political preparations betimes for action both in Italy and in the Balkans. A little encouragement might bring both Jugoslavs and Bulgarians very much nearer to our camp. In America the democratic parties among the Italians have formed a close union for action. Their young men are already offering to form a legion of volunteers to free Italy from Fascism. If that is our purpose, we shall not lack allies.

AMERICA'S INDUSTRIAL MOBILISATION

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT]

THE military policy of the United States has in the past been based on a small regular army backed by the industrial resources and man-power of the country. In an emergency, however, mobilisation of man-power proceeded faster than the industry could produce the items of military equipment needed to make an efficient fighting force. Early in 1918, for example, the munitions programme of the United States was falling far behind schedule due to the unwise decision of the War Department to turn over the American factories that had been busy on British and French munition orders previously to American types and calibres and to introduce a third pattern of equipment into France. The change-over in the factories and delays in getting production in volume on new patterns paralysed production for months. Therefore, in spring, 1918, it was decided to equip the American Army in Europe with French field guns and British heavy artillery and ammunition. The output organised by the British Ministry of Munitions sufficed in 1918 to provide heavy artillery and ammunition of six-inch calibre and upwards for the whole American Army. Thus in May, 1919, Mr. Crowell, United States Assistant Secretary for War and Director of Munitions, reported to his chief: "When the war touched us our strategical equipment included plans ready drawn up for the mobilisation of men. There were also certain plans for the training of new troops. It is worthy of note, however, that this equipment included no plan for the equally important and equally necessary mobilisation of industry and production of munitions, which proved to be the most difficult phase of the actual preparations for war. The experience of 1917 and 1918 was a lesson in the time it takes to determine types, create designs, provide facilities and establish manufacture." It took fully fourteen months to get the first division of the American soldiers into the fighting line in the Four Years' War.

America's shortcomings at that time and the subsequent march of mechanisation have had a salutary effect on her military policy. Since 1920 the United States War Department has had two major planning organisations, the General or Military Staff under the Chief of Staff and the Industrial or Business Staff under the Assistant Secretary for War. The principal task of the latter is to plan the production of supplies and equipment needed by the American Army in war. The Government plants, arsenals and depots are being modernised and their capacity expanded. Even so, they cannot hope to satisfy more than 10 per cent. of the country's defence requirements, since they are basically designed for experimental rather than for mass production of war weapons. For the bulk of her indispensable munitions America must, therefore, have recourse to private industry at large. The allocation of a private plant to a Service Department is controlled by the Assistant Secretary for War. Once the requisition for allocation of a certain plant is approved, the District Executive Officer makes an exhaustive survey of the plant and secures information as to its current production, machinery and equipment, labour, power and fuel needs, transport facilities, and estimates on productive capacity for the desired item. Possible bottlenecks to production, the necessary conversion or expansion of equipment, sources of supply of raw materials, intermediates, etc., are investigated. As an uninterrupted supply is vital, reliance is not placed on a single source or area, allowance being made for sabotage or hostile air raids crippling or even eliminating a supply at a critical period. When a private firm cannot produce the desired item in the time and quantity required without preliminary expansion, the necessary new factory extension plan is prepared by the District Headquarters. Contracts have been placed with all possible dispatch, and the wheels of thousands of America's manufacturing plants all over the country are turning towards a stronger United States.

The man in the street takes the conveyor line as symbolising mass production. The basic thing about quantity production is really an interchangeability of parts and flow of material. It doesn't have to be on the conveyor at all. It is the balancing of the equipment in the plant and a flow of parts that are interchangeable and inspected and qualified, so that it can proceed with production. It is an axiom in engineering that the simplest way of achieving a result or of performing an operation is the best way. That reduction in the number of designs and simplification of specifications make for quantity production, facilitates stocking and servicing of transport and other items of military equipment under war conditions, is better understood in America than elsewhere. The matter that delays production once the designs are established is the assembly of machine tools—"the mother of all production." The bottleneck of the 1917–18 United States arms programme was the measuring gauge. Many machine tools can't be delivered over the counter on demand. To make a tool for boring large-calibre cannon takes a year, and a milling tool to work on the bases of A.-A. guns over a year. And most of the war weapons of to-day are intricate to a degree. The modern automatic rifle requires 2,345 gauges, 1,766 fixtures, 1,388 special tools and 79 punches and dies for its 74 special parts.

How soon can the United States achieve quantity production of aircraft, tanks, shells, big guns and other munitions? The illusion that an adequate defence is merely a matter of a few billion dollars and a few months was dispelled by experienced manufacturers taking stock of their facilities and reporting on the time element early in 1940. Mr. Robertson, of Westinghouse Electric Manufacturing Company, has stated that it would take four months to two years to begin war production in mass quantities. Manufacture of large shells in quantity needs six to twenty-four months, fuse-timers for shells twelve to fifteen months, gun mountings and accessories four to twenty-four months, and sixteen-inch guns and carriages eighteen to twenty-four months. America has already started re-tooling her industries for arms production, and the outstanding fact of the business in the United States to-day is she is building a new industry —to wit, manufacture of war weapons and munitions. The entire range of the engineering industry and machine and precision tool trades is at the disposal of the American ship-builders, automobile and aircraft manufacturers, for building a "two-ocean" navy, turning out thousands of aeroplanes, and equipping a huge land army, which also calls for an industrial railway and utility hook-up.

The American automobile industry is capable of turning out over five million vehicles a year, and twenty-three of her major motor car and truck manufacturers have set up a committee "to develop and make effective a plan for the production of the desired tools, jigs, dies and fixtures and the production of aeroplane parts." In turning out trucks the bottleneck is production of multiple drive units (four- and six-wheelers), but special axle plants now operating three shifts a day have surmounted this difficulty. There is little prospect that tanks will roll off Detroit's assembly lines. For military tanks simply are not the equivalent of tractors. The tank does not lend itself to the progressive assembly line except in a limited sense. It requires mammoth fabricating shops for its manufacture with exceptionally heavy jigs and framework to hold it during construction. Its body (hull) is welded and riveted armour plate and is more properly the product of a shipyard than an automobile plant. Also, power required by a tank is far outside the usual range of automotive practice. The employment of aero-engines in tanks is favoured because they are powerful, light and compact, and can be placed unconventionally in the tail end of the hull. Power up to 1,000 h.p. will be required for 80- or 100-ton tanks. Finally, they need heavy-duty clutches. Already two groups, one at Chrysler and the other at General Motors, are concentrating on the redesign of a medium-weight tank in the light of recent European experience. Ground was recently broken at Detroit for Chrysler's new twenty-million-dollar tank plant, where production is expected to start within a year at the rate of five tanks every eight hours, with a single shift employing 6,000 hands. Should the demand develop, it may be possible to produce fourteen a day on a three-shift basis. The industry is now turning out a hundred light tanks weighing thirteen tons each monthly, and three manufacturers would have heavier tanks in production by next May.

Also, machine-guns, armoured motor cycles, etc., were in pre-production stages early in 1940. The Administration is both spending on its own account as well as advancing capital to industry for expanding plant capacity for specialised war products. Plans are afoot for making a hundred million shells of all calibres next year. The United States War Department has awarded a contract on a cost plus fixed-fee basis to the Savage Arms Company for equipping a machine-gun plant at 117.6 millions. Tooling will be completed in fourteen months. With her industries mobilised, with her native genius for getting results and with authority going hand in hand with responsibility, the armament industry of the United States is forging ahead. But the really tough problems are going to be not what she is now producing but in adjusting production to those inevitable changes that come with war. Overnight the enemy will be developing new weapons, and America must change her production plans to meet and overcome them. Here again the resilience, adaptability and vitality of the American industry can be counted upon to acquit itself creditably. Already the United States armament programme has lifted the volume of industrial production well above the boom level of 1929. The Federal Reserve Bureau's index of production (1935–39 = 100) has climbed from 104 for August, 1939, to 124 last September, compared to 110 for 1929. President Roosevelt, re-elected for his third term, declared that Great Britain and Canada were to receive half of all the country's arms production now coming from the factories, including large bombers.

Under the "British Aid Bill" the President has invented an ingenious substitution of the gun standard for the gold standard under which effective material assistance would be forthcoming without any regrettable financial aftermath. Also, the Administration is ordering for foreign Governments "only those materials which the U.S. Army and Navy could use." This measure, by eliminating double assembly lines in factories and standardising equipment, should expedite production. Finally, the first-hand knowledge of Britain's war production under Blitz conditions seen by two very distinguished American visitors should go a long way in co-ordinating output of war weapons on both sides of the Atlantic.

A LONDON DIARY

THE Boothby affair ended as it had to. The report was conclusive and Mr. Boothby had the sense not to challenge it in the House. The moral to my mind is that gambling in the City and straightforward politics cannot go together. If a man has a huge load of debt round his neck his judgment cannot be unclouded nor his actions disinterested, even in matters about which his political convictions are deep and sincere. He was right in saying that if he had let Lord Simon know that though he had no contractual interest, he had, in fact, a very large actual interest in the settlement of the Weininger claim, this unhappy incident would never have occurred. He also could fairly claim as proof of a good conscience that when his friend Weininger was arrested in his rooms, he rushed off to the Prime Minister. But the details are now unimportant. It is of the utmost importance that our democracy should not suffer from the corrupt smell that has ruined some other democracies. I wish I could be sure that there were no other members of the House of Commons whose affairs would not show a similar or worse record than Mr. Boothby's if they were subjected to a similar examination.

* * *

What a fellow the Prime Minister is! Few people in history have ever had more on their minds than he has to-day; few people have been more beset with awesome problems. Yet he can come to a Parliamentary debate in which the Government has not made to good a showing and wind it up (without having heard a great deal of it) in a most vigorous and persuasive speech, artfully pulling the legs of the Government's most effective critics, getting everyone—or nearly everyone—into a good humour and by way of substance delivering an admirably reasoned argument on a point of political theory of the first importance. As a joke I liked the little aside in which he (an Harrovian) offered to translate *primus inter pares* for the benefit of any old Etonian present. The question of substance—and University students of political theory will have to read this speech—was this. Usually a Cabinet contains the most important secretaries of State and heads of departments. In war a smaller Cabinet is essential. (Many people think it desirable in peace, too—see Lord Haldane's Machinery of Government report, arising out of the Ministry of Reconstruction after the last war.) The Lloyd George Cabinet in office during the final period of the last war consisted of a few experienced and able men without portfolio. Mr. Clement Davies argued in the House that the present Cabinet should be on this model and suggested, as many others have done, that just as Mr. Churchill is head of the Service Departments, so another Minister ought to be in charge of the Home Front. Mr. Churchill replied that the Lloyd George Cabinet only worked because it was a way of giving full scope to one man of genius over the whole war effort; that, in fact, many people beside the five members of the War Cabinet always had to attend Cabinet meetings; that it worked best, in his view, to have the heads of the most important departments in the Cabinet; that the analogy of himself as head of the Service Departments did not work because as Prime Minister he had special authority, while a co-ordinating Minister on the Home Front could only "co-ordinate" and would lack authority over his colleagues. He thought the most businesslike way was to have men who could work together and were accustomed to do so, organised in Executives without a "co-ordinator": On which the proof of the Cabinet pudding will be in the eating.

* * *

Speaking to the Labour Club at Cambridge last week, I found that Socialist undergraduates are sharply divided into those who take the Communist line and those who support the war, but that there is agreement in deploring the suppression of the *Daily Worker* and the *Week*. Undergraduates realise that there is a general issue of liberty at stake. The proctors have taken steps to prevent a meeting which was to be addressed by Mr. Pritt, and those who most disapprove of Mr. Pritt are among the keenest in regarding this as a threat to undergraduate liberty. There have also been cases, which, of course, strengthen the hands of the proctors, of "trouble" at Communist meetings, which have been rudely interrupted by groups of young athletes with more energy than understanding.

* * *

One question inevitably asked was whether the suppression of Communist papers meant that we were slipping down the same drain as the French. People who ask this question should read *Farewell, France!* by Oscar Paul (Gollancz, 6s.), which is the best thing published on the subject since the little pamphlet, *Why France Fell*, published by the U.D.C. *Farewell, France!* is, of course, a much fuller account, which does a good deal, as Mr. Brailsford suggests in his introduction, to fill up those gaps in public knowledge, due partly to the inevitable preoccupation under the invasion threat last summer. It is a valuable and illuminating exercise to examine point by point the resemblances and differences between the internal positions of France before the Blitz in 1940, and England on the eve of the Blitz in 1941.

* * *

In the Government's pictorial advertisement the good patriotic wife persuades husband Jim that this is not the time to get a new winter rig-out or to buy anything for the home. The only way to win the war is by lending every penny we can to the Country. "You've won," says hubby, "from now on *all* our extra money goes into War Savings." But how does all this square with the scores of real estate advertisements which daily appear in the journals. "Mrs. M. wishes to purchase for own private occupation a House of Character in Radnor, Montgomery or Pembroke; 16–22 bedrooms; park, lake or stream." "W—— and Co. are retained by a client anxious to purchase Good Type of House really well-appointed and up-to-date; 12–15 bedrooms; 5–6 baths; up to £20,000 for the right place." The *Times* was indiscreet enough to publish an estate-market report which in a reference to the Battle of London pointed out the opportunities of picking up profitable bargains in sites, houses, and commercial premises. Why should Mr. and Mrs. Jim put their savings into paper securities while their betters are acquiring real estate. I know the argument that such capital transactions do not involve the use of current resources of labour and material. I know the argument that the money may eventually find its way into the Government's pocket. But Mr. and Mrs. Jim could equally argue that they might as well buy diamonds or old furniture and trust that the money will eventually get to the Government. A representative of Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley, the estate agents, told the *Sunday Express*: "Insurance companies, trusts, colleges and other investors are all putting into land money which ordinarily would go into gilt-edged and trust securities. Their aim is not so much to make a big income out of it, but to maintain its capital value. Gilt-edged may break but land will always hold its value in the long run." Is this the secret? Is it the considered opinion of experts that there is a risk attached to Government bonds which informed people can evade by going into real estate? Does Sir Robert Kindersley subscribe to this view? He is advising Mr. and Mrs. Jim. I hope in any case that there will be no "bargains" in bombed sites. I hope the Government will make it clear now that when it comes to reconstruction it will take over required sites at the *lowest* price at which they were acquired during the war.

* * *

The price of liberty is not only eternal vigilance (or rather, as some one said, eternal Committees), but something like eternal nagging. So insidious is the corruption of power that someone must be ready to suspect every exercise of it and to pounce on the slightest manifestation of its abuse. He will be regarded and denounced as a crank, a nuisance and a pest and on occasions he will be some or all of these things. But he will be performing an essential function for society, and freedom has only perished where such people have been forcibly silenced. Josiah Wedgwood has been a life-long vocal champion of liberty. He has always come out into the open for his causes and he has every qualification for judging other people's championings of freedom. In collaboration with Allan Nevins he has compiled *Forever Freedom*, an anthology in prose and verse from England and America. This has been published in the *Pelican* series and is worth the expenditure of two sixpences, one for a copy to carry into battle and one for a copy to send to the nearest Minister or to some acquaintance dressed in a little brief authority. If he has an argument with you about the meaning of liberty, well there's no harm done. It covers many things in the course of a space stretching from the Old Testament to a splendid passage from Mr. Churchill in 1940. But in spite of the crimes perpetrated in its name and the variety of meanings attached to it in different periods, there is an essential idea of liberty—that the individual's happiness and development are the only justification for the use of authority—a thing everyone remembers until they are in authority.

* * *

The story runs—I say no more than that—that a Home Guard sentry at the door of the Ministry of Information stopped Mr. Duff Cooper and demanded his pass. The Minister explained that he was Mr. Duff Cooper and did not need a pass. The sentry: "Can't help who you are. You have to show a pass here. I wouldn't let you in without a pass if you were Sir Walter Monckton himself!"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to W. S. Morris.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

My enjoyment of the B.B.C. Theatre Chorus last night was completely marred by the fact that one of the items given was arranged by that well-known pacifist, Sir Hugh Roberton. I promptly shut off this offending item, but there may have been thousands who were not aware that in listening to Sir Hugh's music their moral was being subtly undermined and their "will to win" being sapped.—Letter in *Manchester Guardian*.

The German emerges from this book a creature of evil. So evil that one despairs, so evil that the oft-repeated claim "that the only good German is a dead German," does not seem un-Christian.—*Manchester Evening Chronicle*.

Although the frequent comparisons of Hitler and Napoleon which appear have stimulated a good deal of argument, I have been driven to the conclusion that the comparison and analogy between the two men will not hold.

Without indulging in the easy task of denouncing the man whom the Germans have taken as their leader, it might be pointed out that Napoleon was of sound landed stock and received the training of a gentleman in the English sense.—Letter in *Daily Telegraph*.

I believe I am correct in saying that, with the exception of Lord Ilchester, not one member of the Jockey Club, nor one leading owner has come into the open and stated boldly that the continuance of racing is a matter of national importance, and to give up racing would be a national disaster. Lord Harewood, I know, has done valuable work and has not spared himself, and I believe that but for him and Mr. Ernest Bevin, the Minister of Labour, there would have been no racing at all after the Spring of last year.—Hon. George Lambton in *Country Life*.

THE FUTURE OF THE LABOUR PARTY

[The writer of the following article is a Labour Party candidate of experience. His opinions are his own: they raise important and controversial issues.—ED., *N.S.&N.*]

PHYSICALLY, the Labour Party is dying. All over the country its death-throes are apparent. Hundreds of local parties "have a name to live but are dead." Active membership has slumped enormously (apart from and in addition to members who have left for the Forces). In scores of constituencies the Labour Party—as a living, breathing, functioning organism—is wrapped in the graveclothes of the mausoleum.

There are three chief reasons for this cessation of life: first, is the fact that most of the members, especially the most actively-inclined ones, are engaged in one form or another of national service—and that, I can quite anticipate, will be described by some as good Labour Party activity. Second, is the fact that black-out everywhere and raid-threats in certain areas have extinguished Party life as expressed in meetings and other such activities. Third, is the "political truce."

I fully appreciate the argument that, in practice, a "political truce" is inevitable and unavoidable in the present circumstances. It is not necessary here to attempt either to justify it or condemn it. It is appropriate, because germane, to point out that a "political truce" must, of necessity, have a far more fatally strangulatory effect on the Labour Party than on either of the other two political organisations. (Recognising that it contains the germ of mortality, the Communist Party have tried to evade it.)

Political activity is the breath of life to the Labour Party and its membership. That is both traditional and fundamental. We have been educated in it and have educated our comrades to it: constant, on-the-toes political action. It has been axiomatic with us that our swords are best sharpened on the whetstone of political warfare: they rust in inactivity. We have welcomed any kind of election for that reason and have frequently thrown ourselves into a "forlorn hope" election, not with any prospect of triumph but with the knowledge that the fight kept us a-sparkle with the vitality of life.

Political activity has been the king-pin that kept the Party wheels securely attached to the war-chariot. When we renounced it for a "political truce" the pin came out and, in hundreds of localities the wheels came off. To deny that self-evident fact is to act the fool by trying to swear that the haystack at which we are looking is not there. The inescapable truth is that the "political truce" has knocked the breath of life out of the Labour Party in many places. To assert that it is more important to win the war than to wage political warfare—and I am not here denying that—cannot alter the fact that in trying to win the war we have been forced to allow political warfare, the spark of Labour Party life, to die out.

Transport House knows this and is most anxiously surveying the situation thus created. Reduced to its lowest component element, the situation is one of financial embarrassment. Headquarters revenue is down alarmingly. Thousands of comrades who used to act as collectors for local Party dues have not collected a penny for months. More thousands have not paid a penny.

Only by including the first three months of 1940 in the 1939 receipts—a shrewd device—was it possible for the 1939 Balance Sheet submitted to the Bournemouth Conference to show £7,553 revenue from local Parties as against £8,383 for the preceding twelve—not fifteen—months. Significant as that was, the story for the year just ending is much more serious. Revenue from local Parties will not total £5,000.

Income from literature sales will show a landslide. Last year they revealed a loss of £1,210, even when more literature was sold because of the vital issues publicised during that pre-war year—than in 1938. This year literature-selling has been almost abandoned, and a huge quantity of unsold material is left on hand.

This financial situation is significant because it may contain a pointer to the future. The political side of the Movement is in decline: local Parties are moribund, the entire National Organisers' department and staff are evacuated to Nuneaton and considerably immobilised. While that is so, the industrial end of the Movement is increasing numerically, financially, in influence and in consciousness of its own power.

If the Labour Party is to be saved financially it will be saved by the Trade Unions. Last year they increased their contribution to the Labour Party by nearly £4,600, revenue from the Trade Unions being six times more than revenue from the local Labour Parties. That position is going to develop this year. I estimate that the Labour Party will derive its contribution revenue in the following proportions: one-tenth from local Parties, nine-tenths from the Trade Unions.

Even last year, one Trade Union contributed to the total Labour Party revenue more than all the local Labour Parties put together. In that connection it should be noted as not minus significance that the last T.U.C. Conference changed a more comprehensive resolution into the sole demand for restoration of the trade unionists' political rights to what they were prior to the 1927 Trades Disputes Act—in other words, making it easier to contribute to the Labour Party funds.

I have suggested that this situation might contain a pointer to the future. I believe that the Trade Unions are going to direct Labour Party policy more than ever: the Labour Party will return to its original function of Parliamentary Representation Committee of the industrial organisations.

Current events conspire to that end. The fact should not be overlooked that the most dominating, and from a workers' point of view the most effective, member of the Labour group in the Cabinet is Ernest Bevin. That is good: in that group he, more than any other, has spoken with the clearest working-class accents.

It looks as if the direction of Labour Party policy is to pass into the hands of the Trade Unions, a fate which I welcome, holding the view that the salvation of the working class must derive from the working class and that the most vital centres of working-class activity must be the workshops. In that case, the place of the practical Socialist (as distinct from the pure Socialist doctrinaire who has another valuable function to perform) is in the Trade Unions helping them to adhere to the Bevin ideal of workers' control of industry.

Which leads me, a parliamentary candidate, to think that our future ground for political activity may be among the workers in the workshops and Unions instead of on the platform. I cannot see much of an immediate future for the platform; perhaps the New Britain will have no place for it, as being undemocratic because demagogic. That may be good. The platform has kept many of us anchored in the safe harbourage of the meeting-hall while the people we should be helping were in the storms outside the hall. It will do us good to discard the platform—and the platform manner as well as the platform mind—and rub practical political shoulders with our comrades in the workshops and offices wherein we work.

Candidates will be the Forgotten Men of politics. Leaders of the Party have declared that they will oppose any "snap" election immediately after this war, like the Khaki Election after the last. Mr. Churchill has not hesitated to suggest 1944 as the war-end date. Assuming that he is right and the Labour leaders oppose an immediate General Election, we have five years at least to wait.

It will then be difficult, almost to the point of impossibility, for our men to walk out of the Government and declare electoral war on the others in the Government with whom they have been, up to that moment, brothers and colleagues. On what could they stage a fight that did not seem to the electors unreal? It is reasonable to assume that the first post-war General Election will conform to the present wartime by-elections. There will be a Government candidate, of the same political colour as the sitting Member, in each constituency. And where will we candidates be then?

We cannot possibly get the "coupon" because we are candidates for seats already occupied by our opponents. That is another reason why I visualise a future for the Labour Party wherein its control will rest in the hands of the Trade Unions—and why practical Socialists should be active Trade Unionists. GARRY ALLIGHAN

GOLOSHES (OR GALOSHES)

"Do you ever wear goloshes?" The question was put to me recently during a period of snow and slush, and awakened memories of one of the many antipathies of my early life. I cannot remember a time when I did not dislike goloshes (the singular of which I thought was "golosha," just as I thought the singular of lozenges was "lossenger"). I disliked them, I think, because I despised them. To wear them seemed to me to be an offence against the spirit of manliness, and, not being noted for manliness myself, I liked all the more a show of it in little things. All that molly-coddle business of wearing mufflers, gloves and goloshes I looked on as unworthy of a male child. To walk soft-padded through the deep January snow and then, on entering a house, to make a careful removal of those rubber casings from one's far too clean boots was, to my mind, to live like an old invalid before one's time. It was all right for women and girls, who were more delicately framed and who were so much more interested in their hands and feet, to wear such things; but for myself I preferred to brave the elements in a pair of boots such as Nature seemed to have designed as the proper wear of man in all weathers. It was only with reluctance, indeed, that I ever made the concession of removing my boots—we did not wear shoes out-of-doors in those days—on arriving home—wet through. "You'll catch your death of cold," I was told. I thought it was one of the prerogatives of a male child to be allowed to risk catching his death of cold.

It may seem odd that Spartanism so uncompromising should have existed in a child otherwise asking only for a life of self-indulgence. I cannot help wondering, indeed, whether my antipathy to goloshes may have been the result, not of a vein of Spartanism in my character but to mere cowardly prejudice. After all, there was something ridiculous about goloshes in those days. In *The Private Secretary*, the curate seemed a doubly comic figure when he began to be concerned not only about his orange but about his goloshes. Anglican England, for some reason that had little to do with the facts of life, liked to make fun of curates, and the funniest of all curates was a curate who wore goloshes. He was like a maiden aunt—maiden aunts, those angels from Heaven, were also funny in Victorian eyes—who wore elastic-sided boots. I, too, I confess with shame, had the contemporary prejudice against elastic-sided boots. Probably, they were very comfortable boots, and in themselves they were no more absurd than laced boots or buttoned boots. They were a labour-saving device, and as little a proper theme for laughter as a safety razor. Yet in my infantile folly I looked on a woman who wore elastic-sided boots as a person dangerously akin to a female clown. The Victorian sense of humour named them "Jemimas." How perverted their sense of humour was is shown by the fact that they regarded one of the excellent daughters of Job as a comic character. There is no warrant for this in Holy Scripture. All we know of the three daughters of Job is contained in the sentences: "And he called the name of the first, Jemimah; and the name of the second, Keziah; and the name of the fourth, Keren-Heppuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren." These, then, are the noble names of beautiful creatures, none found so fair. I once knew a Scotchwoman who had been christened "Keren-Heppuch," and it seemed to me a delinquency on her part to be ashamed of her name and always to sign herself furtively with the initial "K." The Victorians, however, had half-lost the great Puritan tradition which honoured such names as Keren-Heppuch, Obadiah, and Ebenezer. That is how it came about that in derision they gave elastic-sided boots the lovely name of "Jemimas."

Almost as strong as my unreasonable prejudice against elastic-sided boots was my prejudice against buttoned boots worn by men. I knew one or two men who wore buttoned boots, and liked them; but I looked on them as eccentrics comparable to men who did not smoke and wore flowers in their button holes or monocles under one of their eyebrows. Considering the matter from a rational point of view, I cannot see why, if buttons did not degrade the feet of a woman, they should have been regarded as a betrayal of virility on the feet of a man. Yet I know that, if I had been sent out in a pair of buttoned boots, I should have walked through the streets in shame. I should not have dared to turn up at school so shod. I should have felt even more of a fool than if I had arrived in goloshes.

This was not entirely due to slavery to convention. Some of the conventional articles of dress I abhorred with a bitter hatred. My first Sunday bowler hat I would gladly have treated as a football. I hated bowler hats instinctively from the first sight of them, and have never possessed one since I was a schoolboy. I liked the freedom of a cap, and saw no reason why I should wear an upturned black pot on my head—a martyr's crown—on Sunday. Gloves, too, I loathed and, on most days of the year, I loathe them still. I enjoyed going to church—at least I usually enjoyed being in church while I was there—but I detested the unnatural panoply of piety in which I was expected to set out for church.

The truth is, I must always have been rather cantankerous about clothes. I used to bless myself that at least I was not forced to dress like some of the little boys in Eton suits whom I saw making for church on Sunday. Later came the Little Lord Fauntleroy fashion of long curls and velveteen clothes. I myself was born just soon enough to escape this humiliation. A sailor suit was the only severe ordeal to which I was ever exposed, and there were compensations from this in being able to wear a sailor's cap with "H.M.S. Bellerophon" on the ribbon, and in having a braid round one's neck attached to a whistle in the breast-pocket over one's heart. Do not underestimate the importance of a whistle. Without it one feels that one is wearing a sailor-suit on false pretences.

As for other prejudices about dress, I had since my early teens a passion for linen. In those days we schoolboys wore starched shirts almost as expansive as though we had been in evening dress. Waistcoats were sometimes cut so as to show only a little of the white splendour beneath—sometimes to expose the whole glory of our provincial whiteness down below Adam's last rib. Our stiff cuffs linked with gold (or a substitute) protruded beyond the ends of our sleeves. Our collars—they were called "masher collars" stuck into our chins and almost cut into our ears as we walked.

Yet how happy we were in our attempted dandyism! How inferior we felt if, in the absence of an all-linen shirt, we had to play the hypocrite and wear a "dicky." I knew a boy who jumped into the sea after two drowning women and all he could think of when he got back to land and was being brought back to life was expressed in the agonised whisper: "You didn't let them see my dicky?" Philosophers may argue as they like about values, but in the ordinary affairs of man such things count.

Even in bed I loved linen in those days. I abominated a flannel nightshirt, regarding it as no less a mockery of manhood than the nightcaps that a few old men still wore. And, believe me, to go to bed in a linen nightshirt on a cold night and meet the first impact of cold linen sheets was like plunging into icy waters. Then came the introduction of pyjamas—another article of clothing that I first looked at askance as one more betrayal of human dignity. Perhaps, it was because of the name. "Pyjamas" is certainly a word with no flavour of poetry to commend it. There are still men, I believe, who, even while wearing pyjamas, hate them for this reason. A friend of mine said to me only a year or two ago, in the course of a philosophic discussion: "Don't mention the old-fashioned nightshirt, Y. I'm a fanatic on that subject." "Why?" I asked him. "You don't mean to say that you wear one?" "No," he replied, "I haven't the courage. The only man I know who has the courage to go on wearing a nightshirt in these days is a chap who was at Cambridge with me and is now a clergyman in the country." Thus are most of us, brave and cowardly alike, intimidated into wearing things we loathe.

I myself am one of the cowards, holding out only against mufflers and spats and a few other things. "Spats" is a word even less poetic than "pyjamas," and, whether when they were in or out of fashion, I have always looked on them as effeminate pamperers of the feet. I bought a pair once, but that was because I had to appear at a function in a top-hat and did not wish to discredit my host. Where they are now I do not know—those spats of yesteryear. Where even the top hat is—and I like top-hats, they are so comfortable—I do not know. The great thing about many articles of clothing is that they are so easy to lose. That is how I get rid of gloves and mufflers. It is how I should get rid of goloshes if I possessed a pair.

Y. Y.

THE LEICESTER GALLERIES

The winter exhibition at the Leicester Galleries is just what is wanted at the moment; and if those courageous dealers who still keep their doors open could arrange between them to hold half a dozen such in the course of the year British painting would be beholden to them. Valuable in itself, a show of this sort is even more precious as a means: it heartens the painters and reminds the public that art is still alive and that art matters. Here are many of the aces of our contemporary movement—Sickert, John, Duncan Grant, Henry Moore, Vanessa Bell, Frances Hodgkins; and here we can see work by some of those younger artists—in some cases perhaps the epithet should be liberally interpreted—who sooner or later may be expected to join or succeed them. It is to the work of these that a critic should, it seems to me, at the moment devote his attention.

It would be possible, and perhaps profitable, to classify otherwise the artists here exhibiting—it would be possible, that is, if all their works were dated. One might distinguish those who, in the ardours of creation, seem capable of forgetting circumstance from those whom the torments of the time afflict so insistently that they are unable to forget, and who, therefore, are unable to collect and concentrate their powers. To draw attention to such differences would be the business of critics; to draw correct inferences would be possible only to psychologists, to whom I make a present of this field of research.

The new names in this exhibition are Robert Buhler and Robin Pearce. The former sends two small, well painted and honest landscapes which make one suspect that he admires Pissarro—there could be no better object for a young landscape-painter's admiration; the latter a large and highly ambitious snow-piece. That the attempt to deal with so vast and complex a subject should not be wholly successful is hardly surprising: the young artist has set himself much the same problem as Rubens set himself when he sat down to paint the park and chateau of Steen. That he should have attempted it is well; that he should have made something presentable of it, something unmistakably a picture, is noteworthy. It may be he is one of those who are inspired by formidable tasks; at any rate, his other picture, in which he leans rather heavily on Bonnard, though pleasant and painterlike, is less impressive. That Kenneth Martin, who is represented by four or five works, is one of our most promising painters I have already noted; and, should the war ever come to an end, the first and pleasant duty of some enterprising dealer will be to give him a one-man show. The small but agreeable talent of Anthony Grass is here, as in the National Gallery, seen to advantage; but I am not quite sure that John Piper—a charming artist if ever there was one—has successfully solved the problem he sets himself in *Byland Abbey*. It may be that in this combination of queer, detached forms and shrill colours he has arrived at harmony. If so, my ear is at fault.

Alert amateurs will by this time have learnt to look out for pictures by Michael Salaman. Some time ago I hazarded the opinion that he was a painter and a dramatist, and that, so far at all events, he had not found a way of unifying the two sides of his temperament, that when the author came into the studio the painter showed some inclination to jump out of the window. As yet I see no reason to modify this judgment; but *The Yellow Hat*, a scrap of pure painting, is admirable. It is as clear a case as one could wish to see of natural gifts improved by education. Salaman, I am told, has been slightly injured on active civil service. Speaking as a critic—not as a human being, since critics are notoriously inhuman—I hope the injury is very slight indeed. A civilised Government, of course, would see to it that talent such as this was, so far as possible, kept out of harm's way.

Between those whom I have called "aces" and those whom I should like to call "probationers" are a number of artists who have proved their worth but are still manifestly in a state of transition. Of these several are represented. In his flimsy, elegant *Jug of Flowers*, Pasmore is nowhere near his best; but Ivon Hitchens' big canvas is as good as anything he has done and is, therefore, a fine picture. If it be true that Henry Moore, an ace amongst sculptors but amongst painters a newcomer, intends for a while to devote himself to oils, we—I mean we who have always admired his drawings—shall expect something remarkable. And, indeed, *Two Figures in a Shelter*, a gouache heightened with chalk and ink, is remarkable. And so, in its way, in its mature delicacy, is Sir William Nicholson's *Mushrooms*. How a man, possessing such taste and such a pretty sense of paint, can be the author of the study for a conversation piece, hanging hard by, is one of those things which only those familiar with the seamy side of the business can understand.

Clive Bell

SPRING

Bronzer than leaf-green, yet, the abrupt plover
Expands to a black bright, white flapping flower.
Tumultuous, dice-board bird, tumbling, mad in Spring,
Bounced up from earth, down from clouds, to all winds crier,
Furl yourself, flower, become bronze, stealthy, crested,
Watching from pastures. Oh watch a little, plover,
Nor be too glad this Spring.

Naomi Mitchison

IN TIME AND OUT OF IT

Dear Brutus, now running at the Globe Theatre, was first performed towards the end of October, 1917. I made it then an occasion for attempting a description and analysis of Barrie's attitude towards men and women as a dramatist, and in particular of what I found wanting in his interpretation of youth, for he was pre-eminently a dramatist who dealt with youth and its charm. *Dear Brutus* was not the happiest occasion for such commentary, because with the exception of the scene between the artist and his might-have-been daughter the theme of youth did not enter into the play; but I had such an accumulation of impressions left by his other plays that I could not resist arranging them to lead up to an estimate of his outlook on life. If anyone has any curiosity about what that came to, he, or she, will find that article among those reprinted by Messrs. Putnam under the title *Drama*. I have little to add to that estimate except in regard to one curious gift which he possessed and contributed to his immense popularity. This gift was still more obvious in *Mary Rose:* his odd way of making unwelcome facts palatable. He had an extraordinary knack, not of inserting powder in jam—that is common enough—but of making the powder itself actually taste sweet, so that those (they were not very many) who actually examined the stuff out of which his stage-stories were really made were often in doubt if he were not almost as cynical as he was sentimental. Thanks to a peculiarly tender touch he could portray events and facts which would have made his admiring audiences uncomfortable if presented by any other playwright. They would take from him what they would not take without wincing from another. Elderly playgoers will recall how often he made incipient dotage seem on the stage an enviable condition without suppressing its symptoms, or present what was really an appalling ignorance in the young of the nature of life as a state of healthy preparation for it. The dominant emotional note struck in *Mary Rose* was a recognition of the awful fact, that in time we forget those we are most fond of and want them no more; " there is no name, with whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last." And then we grow old: the heart becomes like an old bird's-nest filled with snow, the mind more occupied with little things, little points. How chilly was the world to which the long lost Mary Rose returned at last! But that note of tragedy was drowned for our ears by the tinkling harps of fairy-land, which also robbed us of the true consoling poetry which the play contained—that the dead who die young at least do not grow old, but for us remain, like Barrie's heroine, ever radiantly young.

The theme of *Dear Brutus*, too, is one unpleasant to sentimentalists; that we are what we are, and that had we another chance we would not make a better thing of our lives: " the fault, dear Brutus, lies not in our stars, but in ourselves." But here again a rather harsh theme is handled so that it cannot wound the tender-minded. The only dig at human nature in the play that might hurt, and even that is dealt tenderly, is that the idle innocent elderly hopeful man who is so devoted and happy in his marriage, is just as happy and innocent as a bachelor. He is the only character who has been " true " while in the magic-midsummer wood; " not such a compliment as I thought," his dear old wife says rather sadly. And Lob himself, the ageless old Puck, the host of these people whom he has invited because they *all* believe they would have been better had they not each taken once a wrong turning, he, though betraying occasionally a gleam of malice, is made to talk very tenderly to flowers.

The cast at the Globe is a distinguished one, but the ensemble is not satisfactory. Barrie himself had a genius for producing his own plays. He was able, by modulating the text, tuning the speech of his actors, timing their movements and supplying little pieces of business for them, to make a scene take corners round which, with another driver, it might have come to grief. Another of his gifts was an invention prompt as an improvisatore's, and he would supply a new transition for an interpreter in difficulties. His flexible direction is badly missed at the Globe, and what is astonishing, since nearly all the actors are experienced, there are several moments when non-speakers cease to act. Mr. Gielgud takes the part of the run-to-seed painter. In the first act he appears far too well-pulled-together, too smart and attractive. In the scene in the wood between the painter and his dream-daughter his charm lacks the *crispness* of Gerald du Maurier's personality and acting, so necessary in counteracting the sentimentality. The fault of that scene is that the daughter-father relation tips over into that of flirtation, thus spoiling two different good things. Miss Margaret Rawlings was admirable as the artist's wife in the first act, but with her part in the second—I had forgotten how insipidly melodramatic it is—she could do nothing.

It will be hard for those who go to *Dear Brutus* for the first time to grasp Barrie's originality. For years the fastidious had been calling out for some years that we must get the Drama out of the clutches of realism, that close adherence to the facts of life was becoming boring on the stage. And lo! it was the popular, sentimental Barrie who took the first bold successful steps away from realism. He simply asked us " to pretend " with him, making it ingeniously easy to do so, and left us free to enjoy the novel emotional situations which naturally followed from the initial pretence. *Dear Brutus* and *Mary Rose* are forerunners, too, of those plays which juggle with the reality of time and get dramatic contrasts out of the idea of alternative destinies—those plays, from Lord Dunsany's amusing comedy *If* which entertained us with the adventures that would have befallen a little city clerk had he not missed by a second his morning train, to Mr. Priestley's *Dangerous Corner* which showed the consequences of someone not instantly retrieving somebody else's imprudent revelation. But Barrie did not take his magic with metaphysical seriousness nor ask us to do so; nor did Henry James in *The Sense of the Past*, the unfinished story from which *Berkeley Square* was taken.

This play is to be seen each afternoon at the Vaudeville, and in it Miss Jean Forbes-Robertson acts with a concentration beautiful to watch. It sounds an odd thing to say, but she acts entirely with her eyes and very quietly until in Act III she tumbles softly in a faint; and there is a congruity in this with that part which the subtle novelist would have appreciated. I have re-read his story of an adventure in time since seeing the play, and I can picture James' gestures of dismay at the way his intricate psychological suppositions have been sacrificed to stage performance—inevitably, though the novel, like so much of his later work, was planned *dramatically* in scenes. *The Sense of the Past* was a study in the supernatural, while *Berkeley Square* is based on the Time-Philosophy which Mr. Priestley in *Time and the Conways* and *I Have Been Here Before* seriously accepted. The principal events, too, for some reason I do not grasp, has been moved back from 1820 to 1784; but the emotional pattern which Henry James designed with agonising care, has been preserved, though much simplified of course. Henry James' story was that of a young American possessed by a craving to look behind him into the past, to hear stilled voices and the very tick of old stopped clocks, to whom was vouchsafed a most devastating supernatural experience. He was left an old London house with all its contents intact which had once belonged to English forebears of his, and one night a picture of a young man with his back turned to the spectator, turns round in its frame and descends to meet him—it is himself as he might have been in 1820. The apparition, who was also an American cousin, and the living man then change places in time so to speak. This supernatural machinery of the picture has been dropped in the play; and an attempt been made to win our assent to the notion that what has happened and will happen are going on now—if you understand what I mean—which I don't.

This alters the spirit of the story. In Henry James' version the hero was engaged to an American girl with whom he was on those extremely confidential yet extremely distant terms which in Henry James' novels augur matrimonial relations, and the story was to end with their fulfilment. But in *Berkeley Square* the love between the hero and his eighteenth-century cousin is presented as a relation beyond time, and therefore Peter Standish at the fall of the curtain is left living with the memory of his eighteenth-century cousin, and his contemporary, Helen, goes out of his life. The present version of *Berkeley Square* is much better theatre than the first one Mr. Balderston and Sir John Squire attempted. It has had a marked success in America; it is worth seeing. I remember asking Henry James if the war had disabled his creative impulse. He said it had at first, but he had found a theme sufficiently remote and phantasmal into which his imagination could escape. The dramatised version offers such an exit to us now.

Desmond MacCarthy

PLAYS AND PICTURES

A New Ballet by Frederick Ashton, at the New Theatre

The climax of the Sadler's Wells Ballet season at the New Theatre was the production, last Monday, of Frederick Ashton's eagerly awaited new ballet, *The Wanderer*, a choreographic fantasy on Schubert's pianoforte fantasia, named after the song which supplies the theme of one of the movements. *The Wanderer* justifies our belief in the advancing genius of Frederick Ashton, both intellectually and aesthetically. The fine sense of form which characterised even his earliest ballets has here been imposed on matter as romantic and turbulent as in *Dante Sonata*, with a far more certain effect of achieved beauty as well as of dynamic power; and the significance of this abstract choreographic fantasy has been rendered to an astonishing degree in the medium of line and colour by Graham Sutherland, who here makes his first essay in stage decoration. The two backcloths before which the dance drama develops actually enhance the imaginative vision of the choreographer, as the moving costumes do its visual effect; and the unity of mood of the two artists is such that there are moments when the dance groups actually seem to take mobile form from within the canvas. There is no book to this ballet. The programme names merely the movements of the Fantasia, and the dancers in each. There is, indeed, a developing action, the theatre of which is the soul or mind of the Wanderer (Mental Traveller would better express his function). The principal protagonist is danced with extraordinary intensity and beauty by Robert Helpmann. In the microcosm of his own spiritual and intellectual being he is by turns victim and observer of the distracting passions, dark inhibitions, glittering lures of human life. Youth, love, ambition, evade or entice him, till finally he is lifted above them, neither crucified nor triumphant, but in intellectual detachment. Margot Fonteyn, who leads the worldly lures, dances an exacting and immensely inventive part with beautiful precision and brilliance, brilliantly accompanied also by Mary Honer and Patricia Garnett. Margaret Dale and Deryk Mendel are delightful embodiments of youth, and Julia Farron is a charming, if not quite adequate, Spirit of Compassion. Pamela May and Michael Somes have the loveliest parts of all; tenderly intertwined, absorbed in mutual delight, they dance the exquisitely composed love episodes with entrancing beauty. The principals are admirably supported by the corps-de-ballet. Constant Lambert, who arranged the solo Fantasia for two pianos, and played with great brilliance, deserved his special ovation. The ballet is a triumph for all concerned, and, of course, above all, for its creator, Frederick Ashton.

"Freedom Radio," at the Regal

Several good films about the Nazis have appeared in recent weeks—how good, how (comparatively) fair to the enemy, one could test by comparing them with the sort of thing provided as entertainment and propaganda during the last war. *Escape* (still at the Empire) admirably combines suspense with a glimpse of what we are fighting against; and *Freedom Radio* has some authentic touches of the Nazi new way. Perhaps Mr. Clive Brook is too experienced and unruffled a figure, too essentially English to convey the reality of a Viennese doctor fighting the underground battle for freedom? Yet any incongruity is dispelled by this actor's skill, and by the unstressed heroism of the story. Diana Wynyard as the doctor's wife, an actress well placed in party circles, gives a convincing picture of Nazi patriotism, and her discovery that the voice of the "freedom radio" is her husband's is made dramatic without being theatrical. The Nazi types, too, are distinguished with some subtlety. The end, when both the doctor and his wife are shot down by stormtroopers but the "freedom radio" goes on, is a touch which the director, Anthony Asquith, would have found it more difficult to enforce in peacetime.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, February 1st—
Lord Ponsonby: "The English Diarists," Dick Sheppard Centre, 52 Queensway, 2.30. Admission 1*s*., including tea.
Free German League of Culture Meeting: "In Memoriam Mozart" d. 1791, 36 Upper Park Road, N.W.3, 3.

SUNDAY, February 2nd—
Prof. G. W. Keeton: "Japan's New Order," Conway Hall, 11.
K. B. Smellie: "Social Philosophy," I.S.T.D., 17 Manchester Street, 11.
Special Concert arranged by the Austrian Centre. Artistes include Irene Eisinger and Maria Hiounova. 126 Westbourne Terr, 3.

MONDAY, February 3rd—
Fabian International Affairs Group Snack Lunch. Henry Hauck: "What is Happening in France," 12 Great Newport Street, 1.

TUESDAY, February 4th—
Housing Centre Lunch Talk. J. M. Keynes: "Can We Afford Reconstruction?" 13 Suffolk Street, S.W.1, 1. Members only. Partics. from WHI. 2881.
Miss M. E. Durham: "Albania," Royal Institution, 2.30.

WEDNESDAY, February 5th—
M. Bonifas (de la Comédie Française): "Causerie sur Molière," Institut Français, 3.

THURSDAY, February 6th—
Anthony Blunt: "Picasso-Classicism and Abstraction," Courtauld Inst. of Art, 1.15.
Dr. Betty Heimann: "Introduction to Indian Philosophy," Warburg Inst., 2.30. And on February 12th and 19th.

FRIDAY, February 7th—
C. E. M. Joad: First of Six Lectures on "Some Problems of Philosophy," Birkbeck College, 1.15. Each Friday until March 14th.

Correspondence

THE "DAILY WORKER"

SIR,—A number of your readers must have been glad to see that you dissented from the general welcome that the Liberal and Labour press has given to the suppression of the *Daily Worker*. But, unfortunately, you shared in the several misrepresentations of the *Worker's* views and I submit that all democratically-minded people have a vital interest in banishing this misrepresentation.

First, neither the *Daily Worker* nor the People's Convention ever advocated (to my knowledge) peace overtures to Hitler. When, for instance, the I.L.P. M.P.s tabled a motion in this sense some weeks back in the House, the *Daily Worker* in an editorial repudiated the idea of overtures to Hitler as simply playing into the hands of Nazi-imperialism, and made it plain that what the Communists were advocating was an appeal to the *peoples* of Europe *over the heads* of their Governments to take power into their own hands and thereby create the conditions that would make a "people's peace without annexations and indemnities" possible. But such an appeal could only, of course, be made by a People's Government that was rid of the taint of Versailles or of imperialist ambitions. It was just such an appeal that the Soviet Government made in 1917–18: an appeal which had an enormous propaganda effect in Central Europe especially, and which materially contributed (let us remember) to the revolutions of 1918 which brought the war to an end. In the summer it was the *Daily Worker* that most loudly denounced the Pétain capitulation, pointed out that a section of our own ruling class nurtured similar capitulation-to-Hitler inclinations, and that the people's peace it was proposing had nothing in common with this. If it be asked how the advocacy of a peace slogan at all is consistent with opposition to Fascism, the answer is, I think, a plain one: that the people of Europe will manifestly make a revolution against Hitler, Mussolini and Pétain (*and* against the Sikorskis and Francos with which our Government loves to consort) *only* in the hope of bringing peace to an agonised Europe, and *not* (as you and Messrs. Gollancz and Laski seem to imagine) under the glamour of enlisting in the service of the de Gaulles and Stahrembergs and Rauschniggs and the Margesson-caucus in a *jusqu'à bout* war which may any month be switched into a holy war against the U.S.S.R. At the same time, it was the *Daily Worker* which published the manifestoes of the German and Italian Communists appealing to struggle against the predatory designs of their own Governments.

Again, the *Daily Worker* cannot be accused of deliberately fomenting strikes and interruptions of production. True, it has resolutely opposed alike the political truce, industrial conscription and any relaxation of trade union rights; it has said that the war-burden must be placed on the rich and not on the workers; it has given prominence to news of industrial action and has welcomed any and every sign that the working-class movement was keeping alive despite the war and defending its rights against encroachments in the only way open to it. But it has expressly repudiated anything in the nature of industrial sabotage on more than one occasion, and it has attempted to expose the way in which *capitalist* control of industry has been responsible for sabotaging production and placing vested interest before social needs. How does this overstep the limits of ordinary freedom of criticism? If this is "asking for suppression," then so is every forthright criticism of a Government in wartime. And is it so easily forgotten that it was this paper that has had a record, both before and since the war, of consistent and constructive advocacy of efficient A.R.P. protection? Perhaps, after all, it is this that has got under the skin of Mr. Morrison, as it so evidently did of his culpably complacent predecessor.

M. D.

[This fantastic account of the political position of the *Daily Worker* presents, we suppose, the line of the party defence. The reader is intended to get the impression that the *Daily Worker* has been, throughout the war, just a critic of the Government, intent, not to hamper the war effort and produce defeat (in order to create the opportunity for revolution), but merely to improve the Government's methods of conducting the war, both on the political and military sides. The facts are:

1. The *Daily Worker* during the whole of last winter used, as its main slogan, the words "Stop the War." This was at least a straightforward and intelligible line.
2. On April 22nd last Mr. William Rust was contributing a column in the *Daily Worker* headed "How We Oppose the War," in which he explained the methods by which Communists should oppose the war.
3. As far back as February last the *Daily Worker* attributed the blame for the outbreak of the war to Britain exclusively and specifically exonerated Hitler. "Hitler repeated once more his claim that the war was thrust upon him by Britain. Against this historical fact there is no reply. Britain declared war, not Germany. Attempts were made to end the war, but the Soviet-German peace overtures were rejected by Britain. All through these months British and French Governments have had the power to end the war; they have chosen to extend it." *Daily Worker*, February 1st, 1940. (The last two sentences show that it is not true that the *Daily Worker* has always opposed a negotiated peace with Hitler. When the *Daily Worker* was asked this question on April 5th, it replied "this is one of the many questions that cannot be answered by a simple 'Yea, Yea or Nay, Nay.'") An ambiguous answer, and why now pretend that it is only the ruling class that could ever consider such a thing?
4. The *Daily Worker* can undoubtedly be, accused of "deliberately fomenting strikes and interruptions of production"; to take two examples out of hundreds, it wrote on October 15th last "Can it be that the Government is afraid of the growing realisation in the factories of the nature of this war, for which the workers are asked to sacrifice their liberties and living standards . . .? On October 5th the Central Committee of the Communist Party was reported in the *Daily Worker* as resolving that "The mass ferment in the factories is rising, and has shown itself in innumerable minor actions and lightning strikes—the prelude of greater struggles."

ED. *N.S. & N.*]

"THE WEEK"

Sir,—Some will think it boorish if I make one correction and one remark upon Critic's generally fair and friendly account of my paper, *The Week*, which has now had the honour to incur the wrath of the War Cabinet.

For there are some who, appalled by the rapidity and extent of current Gleichschaltung, consider one should certainly not go peering into the mouth of any gift horse of the kind that may come cantering up. Still, the matter is all of interest, and partly of importance, so :—

It is not quite true to say *The Week* started with no capital. We had £46, which I borrowed and spent, bar 25*s*., on getting out the first number and circularising people with it.

Subscriptions which arrived in response—about twenty annual and half-yearly ones—were enough (taken as capital) to pay for the next issue, new circularisation, and *ainsi de suite*.

Then Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, at a press talk in connection with the World Economic Conference, denounced *The Week* for lyingly spreading alarm and despondency by imputing materialistic motives to the Powers there assembled and indicating there would be a rough-house followed by collapse. That helped a lot.

Listening once again last week to the so familiar voices of Governmental wrath, and in particular to that of Police Inspector Rogers reading over to me the Home Secretary's denunciations, I gave thought to the boomings of Mr. MacDonald, and to what came of it all. Mr. MacDonald and his Home Secretary (who on earth was he, by the way ?) did not have Regulation 2D to assist them in suppressing dangerous thoughts, and compelling editors to eliminate matter calculated to " weaken the will of the people," as Dr. Goebbels said in October, 1933, and Mr. Morrison said in January, 1941.

That is my correction. My remark is this :—

Critic considers *The Week* " deteriorated " because Communist views on the war seem to him " silly."

When we indicated the World Economic Conference would collapse because of imperialist rivalries, we were told that was a silly Communist lie. It collapsed.

When we told—in September, 1936—the facts about what was going on in Spain, we were denounced in London, Paris, Rome and Berlin as silly and wicked Communist trouble-makers. An official at the British Foreign Office tried to have us suppressed for allegedly stealing diplomatic documents. A French newspaper called upon the British Government to suppress us. That was the organ of M. Chiappe.

When we were the first to apply the term " Fifth Column " to British conditions and indicated where it was to be found, the Fifth Columnists said : Pay no attention. These people are secretly Communists, and very silly.

When we declared the notorious *Times* articles suggesting cession of Sudetenland to Hitler was a prelude to total betrayal of Czechoslovakia, we were called the " fat boys of Europe " making people's flesh creep in the interests of Communist policy.

On the eve of Hitler's march into Prague we were denounced as silly or worse for suggesting that official sunshine statements by the Government were so much hokum.

When we said that the anti-Communist, anti-working class decrees and censorships of the French Government during the war were having disastrous effects upon the capacity of the French people to defend themselves, we were threatened, and our copies for South Africa and India seized.

When we said the propaganda stories of the Finns sweeping on victoriously were nonsense, the censorship refused our American cables.

And so on. And so on. And so, dear Critic, will you forgive me if I opine it would be wiser for you to wait a little while before your committing yourself to the admission that my views on this situation, too, seem to you " silly " ?

Claud Cockburn

[Critic writes : " While I strongly disagree with the Government's decision to suppress the *Daily Worker*, I understand its reasons. I can find no reputable reason for suppressing the *Week*, which cannot be held to have 'damaged the war effort' or led the workers to go slow in the factories. Mr. Cockburn easily shows that he was often right in the past : since the line he took was usually mine and often Mr. Churchill's, no argument arises. The reasons why Communist propaganda seems silly now are briefly that on its own analysis over a long period the only hope of the working class against Fascism was to stir the ruling class here to resist the Nazis and Italian Fascists. When they at length do so it seems silly—and irresponsible—to turn round and suggest that it is all one, whether British or German imperialism wins. There is no analogy between Russia in 1917 and Britain in 1941. Could the Russian revolution have succeeded in stirring revolution in Germany if Britain and France had not been fighting against Germany, even in those days, when there was a strong independent Socialist movement in Germany? Nor if there were a Brest-Litovsk here would it be possible to build a Socialist Britain with the Germans occupying England as they do France to-day. Finally, Communists seem under the delusions : (*a*) that it would be possible to have a revolution here and *then* resist the Nazis (who would, in fact, be in occupation almost as soon as it started, and (*b*) that Stalin, whose object now is to avoid war with Germany, would suddenly switch round and come to our aid if a strong Government now fighting the Nazis gave way here to a 'People's Government' out for a 'People's Peace.' " Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

STATE MEDICAL SERVICE

Sir,—The recent correspondence in your columns on the above is a typical example of how easy it is for all of us to fail to see the wood for the trees. I have just re-read Mr. Ritchie Calder's two articles. Some members of each class of person mentioned in them—general practitioners, shelter doctors, E.M.S. personnel and voluntary hospital workers—seem to regard these articles as a personal attack. But what is really objected to by Mr. Calder is the obsolete system under which practice is carried out, and in which so many doctors work as more or less isolated units in commercial competition with all others. The bottle-of-medicine-cash-or-credit system was all very well half a century ago and probably the best that could be devised at that time. But in the last fifty years great changes have taken place.

(1) We have learned that disease is not always an " act of God " but that much can be prevented.

(2) Medicine, like the army, has been "mechanised"; complicated and expensive apparatus is necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of many affecitons.

(3) There is so much to be learned that no single doctor can know it all. A team and not an individual is, therefore, essential.

Your correspondent, Mr. H. S. Syrett, puts the case clearly when arguing against a shelter medical service. He says " any efficient service must provide for proper examination and diagnosis, X-Ray examination and other specialised treatment, which can only be given in special departments of an organised hospital, and under suitable conditions." Exactly. But surely this criticism does not apply to the shelter doctor only, but to every general practitioner; indeed, every doctor who is working outside a hospital. I am quite aware that there are in some places hospitals, voluntary and municipal, in which these facilities can be obtained, but the general practitioner has no direct connection with either. What is required is a system in which the G.P.s, all the hospitals and the preventive services work together as a unified whole for the prevention and cure of disease and the maintenance of health.

In his apologia for the voluntary hospitals Mr. Syrett makes two statements which I am sure he would wish corrected. He speaks of our voluntary hospitals " from which all the medical training and knowledge of our present medical services have been obtained." I would remind him that valuable research work is now being turned out from many of the municipal hospitals in this country and quite a lot of teaching done in them. The majority of the hospitals on the Continent are State controlled, and yet their contribution to medical science has been enormous.

He goes on to speak of the contributors to the Hospital Savings Association " who at all events have sufficient faith in our voluntary hospitals to believe they get full value for their money, as indeed they do." I would remind Mr. Syrett that the municipal hospitals of London accept Hospital Savings Association vouchers in place of payment or assessment, and I believe this applies to other towns as well. In London a large number of people prefer the municipal hospitals believing that they get better treatment in them. They contribute to the Hospital Savings Association although they never expect or desire to enter a voluntary hospital. The voluntary hospitals have rendered splendid services in the past. It is a pity to overstate their case.

Portland Place, W.1. Somerville Hastings

Sir,—Lacking piety and wit, I cannot attempt to answer Dr. Lister Boyd, who says he will " neither condone nor forgive " my blasphemy (apparently) in criticising certain aspects of General Practice.

But to the Chairman of the National Temperance Hospital, I should point out :

(1) That I did not criticise the Hospital Savings Association. I stated the plain fact that over £1,000,000 is subscribed yearly in weekly contributions from workers (most of whom are already paying National Health Insurance) so that they and their dependants can get hospital treatment and that over a million H.S.A. contributors attend London out-patient departments every year. My point was that these out-patients were, by their own free choice, choosing hospital-clinic treatment instead of their private doctor.

(2) He can rest assured that the data on which I based my criticism of the Emergency Medical Service are quite official.

(3) Nor need he doubt the accuracy of my comparison of the work done by the London voluntary hospitals and the L.C.C. hospitals. It has the best authority.

(4) The great work which has been done in the past by the voluntary hospitals is not in dispute. I am concerned not with their past but with their future, and the observable fact is that their present financial and administrative structure is quite unstable.

(5) That is surely confirmed by his own statement about their future usefulness " if adequate financial assistance were forthcoming." From where ? Private charity or public funds ?

Ritchie Calder

EDUCATION

Sir,—Mrs. Wootton is too old a controversial hand to fall into the error of supposing that anything is to be gained by a dispute about facts. The thing to do with facts is not to dispute about them, but to look them up. Having looked up mine, I cannot agree that classes have been approved without exception when " the enrolment of students comes up to the bare minimum figure laid down by the Board." Moreover, I would remind Mrs. Wootton that regulations are not always just plain regulations—plain, that is to say, for all to read and for all to understand. Sometimes they require to be interpreted. Now an interpretation can be more or less generous according to the disposition of the interpreter, and what I suggested was that there had been cases in which the generosity had been less when it might have been more. I see no reason to modify this suggestion. C. E. M. Joad

4 East Heath Road,
Hampstead, N.W.3.

THE SHORT STORY

Sir,—I have read with astonishment certain remarks about the English short story which are made by Mr. George Orwell in your issue of January 25th. What exactly Mr. George Orwell means when he speaks of " plot " and " story " is hard to know, for the story of Mr. H. E. Bates which he declares to be without " plot " is evidently bursting with it ; and among the list of first-class stories which he gives, those of D. H. Lawrence and Joyce are flagrant examples of that poetic evocation of " atmosphere " and " character " which Mr. Orwell declares to be the bane of the modern short story. There is evidently an indignation meeting going on in Mr. Orwell's mind without much certainty what the indignation is all about. His readings of *The Gem* and *The Magnet* seem to have confused his mind. Isn't he saying merely that he only likes action stories ? When he says a story must have " plot " does he mean " situation," and when he says " story " does he mean " narrative " ? Surely character and atmosphere, the isolation of moments, are especially suited to the short-story writer, and in emancipating himself from the mechanical tricks and formulae to which so short a form inevitably lends itself, the modern writer has been both refreshing and original.

V. S. Pritchett

Current Literature

THE GREAT GATSBY

MEDITATION on the sorrows of the very rich is among the few lasting pleasures that remain to the poor. So unlike the troubles one has oneself experienced, these sorrows are nevertheless extremely poignant—sometimes more poignant because more elusive than one's own. His prosperous friends deserve the gratitude of every writer. Not only do the miseries of which they so often complain throw a vivid light on the origins of human unhappiness: but the relative freedom that the rich enjoy—coupled with the restrictions and neurotic compulsions they themselves provide—give their characters many satisfying quirks and oddities. Thus So-and-So affects an attitude of disarming simplicity. He loves to entertain his poorer companions at windy *fêtes champêtres* where sandwiches are munched from paper bags and curdled milk is consumed from sun-warmed bottles, or at impromptu meals he has run up in the kitchenette. Almost every rich man (though prone to bursts of emotional generosity) cherishes a troop of darling meannesses which pop out should his resentment have been once aroused; then the claret is ordered back to its bin in the cellar and a carafe of corky Algerian wine is whisked from the sideboard. He is determined to be loved in spite of the vintage: and a suspicion (often justified) that he is not admired for himself, together with mysterious feelings of guilt and anxiety, makes the typical rich man both an absorbing subject for investigation and a profitable field for exploitation by contemporary witch-doctors who consent to unravel his tangled soul-skein at a fiver a sitting. Yet the Maecenas of to-day still lacks his novelist. He has been described, of course, but not yet analysed as his plight deserves.

One of the many virtues of Scott Fitzgerald's admirable short novel, *The Great Gatsby* (a book which, since I saw a notice of the novelist's death, I have been rereading with far less disappointment than I might have anticipated—indeed, now and then, with heightened pleasure), is its delineation of two rich men during the American boom. Here are studies of the effects of wealth from contrasted points of view. Tom Buchanan, husband of the delightful Daisy (whom Jay Gatsby, Buchanan's complement and foil, has adored for several fruitless and silent years) displays all the self-assurance and all the petulance of inherited riches. Men who belong to the class of Tom Buchanan, secure in their partial control of matter and the material circumstances of their everyday lives, are often alarmed to notice that the world of the spirit refuses to follow suit. They develop therefore a feeling of nervous frustration which expresses itself in the infliction of small tyrannies, a disposition to move restlessly from place to place, a vague hankering for cultural tit-bits of the more digestible kind and a querulous dissatisfaction with their present surroundings. Scott Fitzgerald's portraiture is beautifully sharp-edged:

> Daisy was my second cousin once removed. . . . Her husband among various physical accomplishments, had been one of the most powerful ends that ever played football at New Haven—a national figure in a way, one of those men who reach such an acute limited excellence at twenty-one that everything afterwards savors of anti-climax. . . . Why they came East I don't know. They had spent a year in France for no particular reason, and then drifted here and there unrestfully wherever people played polo and were rich together. This was a permanent move, said Daisy over the telephone, but I didn't believe it—I had no sight into Daisy's heart, but I felt that Tom would drift on forever seeking, a little wistfully, for the dramatic turbulence of some irrecoverable football game.

The subsequent account of Tom's attempt to discuss sociology at the dinner-table:

> "Civilisation's going to pieces," broke out Tom violently. "I've gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you read *The Rise of the Coloured Empires* by this man Goddard? . . . It's all scientific stuff; it's been proved."
>
> "Tom's getting very profound," said Daisy, with an expression of unthoughtful sadness. . . .

and the discovery that he has found a mistress at a filling-station half-way to New York, and is making his wife spasmodically and casually miserable, helps to supply the portrait with the detail it needs, as that of a character equally impossible either to commend or condemn. Financial independence seems to have relegated him to a moral vacuum, where he whirls upon his own axis with self-destructive energy.

By comparison, his rival is unsophisticated. The plutocratic, the enigmatic, the fabulously generous Jay Gatsby (born James Gatz, son of a poverty-stricken Long Island farmer), Romantic and fraud and bootlegging racketeer, is still convinced of the poetic omnipotence of the wealth he has come by and lives in a boyish dream-world that is buttressed with dollar bills. Trimalchian hospitality is his means of self-expression. Night after night he crams his vast ugly mansion overlooking Long Island Sound with "interesting people . . . people who do interesting things. Celebrated people." The celebrated and the semi-celebrated arrive in hordes. They are usually uninvited by and unknown to their host; and they drive away from his house through the blear-eyed dawn, or depart after wild nights in sumptuous guest rooms, leaving behind them only the spilth and wreckage of a successful party, broken glasses, sodden grape fruit rinds and drifts of cigarette ash; but Gatsby is neither disconcerted nor disillusioned. He moves silently, almost anonymously through the scene he has conjured up, appreciating its extravagance with platonic enthusiasm. His credulity is on the same scale as his generosity. He enjoys the luxury of permitting himself to be made a fool of.

Gatsby, in short, is the plutocrat whose natural outline has not yet been softened by the nectarine bloom of aristocracy; but, although the world of the Buchanans is more distinguished, in its essentials it is as vacuous and as absurd. Gatsby, at least, has the bravado of the born romantic; while far beneath both households, glimmers the ashy universe inhabited by Tom Buchanan's mistress, Myrtle Wilson, and the friends she gathers round her in her Manhattan love-nest. The pretensions of the poor, after all, differ from those of the rich not in being any less aggressive but (through force of circumstances) less extended and less eloquent:

> Mrs. Wilson had changed her costume some time before, and was now attired in an elaborate afternoon dress of cream-coloured chiffon, which gave out a continual rustle as she swept about the room. With the influence of the dress her personality had also undergone a change. The intense vitality that had been so remarkable in the garage was converted into impressive hauteur. Her laughter, her gestures, her assertions became more violently affected moment by moment, and as she expanded the room grew smaller around her, until she seemed to be revolving on a noisy, creaking pivot through the smoky air.
>
> "My dear," she told her sister in a high mincing shout, "most of these fellas will cheat you every time. . . . I had a woman up here last week to look at my feet, and when she gave me the bill you'd of thought she had my appendicitus out."
>
> "What was the name of the woman?" asked Mrs. McKee.
>
> "Mrs. Eberhardt. She goes around looking at people's feet in their own homes."
>
> "I like your dress," remarked Mrs. McKee, "I think it's adorable."
>
> Mrs. Wilson rejected the compliment by raising her eyebrows in disdain. "It's just a crazy old thing," she said. "I just slip it on when I don't care what I look like."

But it would be doing Scott Fitzgerald a grave injustice to suggest that his novel was merely an essay in social satire, with special reference to the abuses of the capitalist system. His strictures on the worlds he describes are implied, not stated. Published in 1925, *The Great Gatsby* is one of the most typical and also one of the most brilliant products of that exciting, disappointing period which witnessed the birth and extinction of so many hopes and crashed at last into the doldrums of a vast depression. It is a period piece with an unusual degree of permanent value, having the sadness and the remote jauntiness of a Gershwin tune, the same touches of slightly bogus romanticism—"the stiff tinny drip of the banjoes on the lawn"; the headlights of departing cars which wheel like long golden antennae across the obscurity of the "soft black morning"—the same nostalgic appeal to be taken seriously, a plea that in Scott Fitzgerald's case has, I think, succeeded. A large number of American mannerisms start with Scott Fitzgerald (who somehow never repeated that early triumph, though many of his long short stories are well worth reading) and not a few modern novelists are his unconscious imitators. To-day when the Bum is a best-selling hero—the Share-Cropper, the vagrant Okie, the landless Poor White—it is refreshing to read this romantic tract on the sorrows of Dives. PETER QUENNELL

THE MODERN ALADDINS

The Century of Science, 1840–1940. By F. SHERWOOD TAYLOR. *Heinemann. 8s. 6d.*

British Scientists of the Nineteenth Century, Vol. 1. By J. G. CROWTHER. *Penguin Books. 6d.*

Since the human species began, the great majority of men have lived on a treadmill. Until the discovery of the magic lamp of science, production attained but a slight excess over the minimum of food and shelter needed for bare life. For most men, to stop toiling was to starve. The prosperous were always a small class living upon the labour of others. So they are to-day. But mechanism has made it physically possible to produce a huge excess of goods over bare need. The genie of the lamp, were he wisely commanded, could afford to every human being in the world not merely a bare livelihood but the whole material basis of a full life. Every man, up to the limit of his native capacity, might have bodily health and mental development, creative leisure, and a career of self-expression in service of his fellows. But those who were able to avail themselves of the genie, first one and then another of the industrial pioneers, each for a moment snatching at the lamp as it swung within his reach, asked only for personal freedom from the treadmill. Of course they promised their fellow toilers, sometimes with sincere intention, that they would use their freedom and their power to emancipate all. But in fact the mass of men remained in bondage, an increasing and overcrowded host, trampling one another as the treadmill whirled under their feet. Presently their clamour and threats, but above all their stink, shamed or terrified the lamp-controllers into slightly improving conditions on the mill. Sanitation of sorts and a grudging health service made the toilers less obnoxious. Later the cinema and the radio provided dope to keep them docile. But the treadmill whirled faster and faster. Its thunderous racket caused great cracks in the flimsy sky-scraping civilisation which the lamp-controllers had built over it. At the present moment the whole structure is toppling.

Dr. Sherwood Taylor's new book deals less with science than with the hundred years of social history in which science has revolutionised human conditions. After a prologue on the rise of applied science in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries he gives an interesting account of the growth of transport and communications throughout his chosen period. Without this circulatory system of goods and ideas the modern integrated world would have been impossible. Still more interesting are his chapters on the war against dirt, the growth of medicine and the conditions of labour. These have often been described before, but never more effectively.

In 1840 a room twelve feet square might accommodate four families. In London the sewage from the cesspools percolated into the wells and the river, which were the only sources of drinking water. Epidemics and fear of infection finally scared the prosperous into providing an effective public sewerage system. Improved water came much later, because the existing bad water supply was a sphere of private enterprise and vested interest. Dr. Sherwood Taylor shows that in field after field shocking conditions were tolerated for the sake of vested interest, and until they began to affect the well-to-do. "In no age of the world have many people cared about the suffering of others." A few have cared, have agitated, have undertaken scientific research for improvements; but most have merely shrugged their shoulders, as we ourselves have done over our depressed areas. Progress in medicine and public health service has been remarkable, but it should have been far greater. To-day the sum spent by the British Government each year on medical research is no more than the cost of killing thirteen men in modern warfare. Describing the transition from the domestic to the factory system Dr. Sherwood Taylor notes that, time after time, human callousness and selfishness were able to take cover behind the sacred principle of *laisser-faire*. He goes on to describe with much valuable detail the evolution of the middle-class home, of clothing and of the use of leisure under the ever-growing influence of science. There follows a chapter to make us realise the fantastic complexity and interrelatedness of the contemporary world. Twenty thousand people in half a dozen countries, he calculates, have a hand in the making of a single loaf of bread.

In his final chapter he deals with ideas. After the weakening of religious sanctions two new types of morality arose, the purely altruistic and the social, which derives morality entirely from the purposes of the social group, whatever those purposes happen to be. This puts the state above morality. He traces the expansion of the power of the state over the individual's body and mind, up to the point at which men will shamelessly torture and lie at the state's bidding. He himself inclines to the other morality, but in spite of many sensible remarks he lacks clear orientation. Faithful to the spirit of science, he seems to believe that the main cause of the world's disorder lies in the fact that truth is no longer sacred. Science, he says, is indifferent to morality, but demands loyalty to truth in order to function at all. Yes, but this is not enough. His altruistic morality needs some sanction. He cannot found it upon orthodox religion; for, although he recognises that materialism is not proved, he considers religion outworn. He sees that in the present war the enemy, whose religion exalts the state, is to be defeated only by a contrary ideal; and he longs for "a Man," a prophet, to express with genius and passion the ideals that are acceptable to all reasonable and kindly men of science. What he cannot understand is that rationalism alone can never fire men, and moreover is not the root of his own altruism. It is sad that, while on the one hand the religious people cling pathetically to their doctrines, on the other the scientific people, rejecting those doctrines in the name of reason, pathetically idealise intellect itself. Rightly he says that our troubles are due partly to the fact that the sciences of human nature lag behind the physical sciences. But he never clearly grasps that the idealisation of the spirit of science has blinded men to the essential truth embedded under the doctrines of religion, the illuminating and energising experience which Blake, for instance, so vividly knew.

The same pathetic lack is evident in Mr. Crowther's useful and brilliant account of three great English scientists, Davy, Faraday and Joule, which is now reprinted as a "Pelican." Very intelligently Mr. Crowther describes their work and shows how their characters were conditioned by their social class and the climate of their age. Rightly he points out that it was the growth of industry that produced so many great scientists in the nineteenth century. This principle of social conditioning is vastly instructive, but like all good principles it may lead to extravagance. Comparing Joule's discoveries with Darwin's Mr. Crowther argues that Darwin's wider fame was due, not to any greater significance in evolution compared with the conservation of energy, but to evolution's "apparent justification of the methods of competitive industry." This theory always seems to me too clever by half, like so much of the detail of contemporary sociological and psychological speculation. Another point. In dismissing Faraday's religion as *merely* one of his limitations, and his morality as merely negative, Mr. Crowther displays the blindness characteristic of all those who regard religion as *merely* a delusion. Surely the great scientist's loyalty to the tiny sect of Sandemanians should suggest that, behind the doctrines of the sect, or manifested perhaps in the daily life of that minute particular community, he experienced, however confusedly, a much needed truth which his physical research could not reveal.

Both these books are usefully illustrated.

OLAF STAPLEDON

NEW NOVELS

Manhold. By PHYLLIS BENTLEY. *Gollancz.* 9s. 6d.

Fool of Time. By BEATRICE KEAN SEYMOUR. *Heinemann.* 9s.

Christmas at Cold Comfort Farm. By STELLA GIBBONS. *Longmans.* 8s.

These three well-known women novelists represent the more respectable sort of library fiction. They are highly esteemed by Ladies Luncheon Clubs, by readers of *Good Housekeeping*, by those who take the advice of the girl in Boots and pass it on to friends over dinner. Had I the happiness to be George Orwell I should not fail to describe them as the folk-literature of the middle class, adding the threat that you would be unable to enter into them appreciatively unless you had sat in a deckchair at Bournemouth or lolled in a hammock in Surrey.

Miss Bentley has the most meat (which is a consideration nowadays). *Manhold* is an old-fashioned drama of family feud and protracted revenge. Sam Horsfall, an eighteenth-century Yorkshire clothier, sends his brother-in-law, Ned, to Norwich to learn the secret of a certain type of weaving. There is a dispute over a partnership between them, and after a quarrel Ned is drowned on his way home. His daughter, Ann, grows up obsessed with the idea of revenge and becomes the *femme fatale* in the life of Sam's spineless son, Richard. A complicated will gives plenty of scope to the general ill-humour. Ann eventually commits suicide in the stream which drowned her father, after dragging Richard to poverty and disgrace, and the book winds up with a grand and mysterious fire which lights the sky so vividly that you

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the bodley head

could see to read *Rebecca* by it. Miss Bentley lacks, it is true, that rich Freudian undercurrent which distinguishes Miss Du Maurier's incomparable story, but she has everything else that matters—the very simple one note characterisation, the complicated Victorian plot, the powerfully stimulating emotions. Here, for example, is that high heroical tone which I had thought was the unique possession of Mr. Tod Slaughter—

> "I shall be glad to quit this place—knavery always stinks," said Gildersome with simple dignity, making for the door.

In the episode where Ann's father drowns, Miss Bentley recaptures the flavour of traditional unabashed melodrama which seemed to die with the passing of the silent movie serial. Having enacted a strong *scena* on the theme of Sell No More Beer To My Father, the little girl is now trying to rescue her dad from the even greater perils of water—

> Should she leave him and go herself to the mill? But if she left his head for an instant it sank again beneath the surface. Which should she do? Go or stay? The dilemma was cruel.

Miss Bentley does it all with great gusto and a very efficient command of the rudiments of story telling. The background of Yorkshire industry is interesting, and the plot is such an old and well-tried favourite that the casting of a doubt upon it would almost amount to an attack on national morale.

Mrs. Seymour's modernity is a striking contrast to *Manhold*. Not for her the lusts of vengeance, the solemnity of curses, the awful deaths by fire and water. The characters in *Fool of Time* are all too reasonable and nice for anything of the sort: a little adultery, perhaps, but that after all is *à la mode*. For the rest, picnics near Hindhead, a run in the car to the coast, dinner at the right places, earnest controversy about the Spanish Civil War and Horrid Hitler, and a great deal of marital unrest. Carin, the heroine, returns from the United States to visit sister Alma. Carin is divorced and about to remarry, but she is sick of an old passion for Alma's husband, Stephen, which she apparently has to get out of her system. Stephen, one of those pompous and masterful husbands that lady novelists describe with rapturous and delighted disapproval, is in the same sad state in relation to Carin. And of course Alma knows. . . . Fortunately everyone is very stiff about the upper lip, and Carin is able to relegate Stephen to a place in girlhood's memories and proceed with her absorbing love-life in the United States.

It is a slight story, and Mrs. Seymour does not press it. She is more interested in passing round snapshots of "the land of lobelias and tennis flannels," of

> . . . decent godless people:
> Their only monument the asphalt road
> And a thousand lost golf balls.

Of this world, of Guildford and points southwest, Mrs. Seymour is a most indulgent interpreter. She approves of it all, at its own valuation. The children are frightfully sensitive and talented; a bit frustrated too, but that's not their fault. Carin, although she's a divorcée aunt, has lost none of her oomph. When the wind is in a certain quarter she may be detected reading the poems of that Rupert Brooke of feminist maidenhood, Miss Millay. She is herself a writer; but, of course, they are an artistic family, for Alma might have been a great painter if marriage to Stephen had not crushed her genius.

This would make a pleasantly macabre satire in the hands of Mr. Wyndham Lewis or some other Spilsbury of the Western Morgue. Mrs. Seymour prefers to swallow it whole. Her characters are barely distinguishable from the lay-figures of the advertisement columns, the monstrous cinema faces, the hints on allure, the million languishing Lydias of Rohmance, the smart equipment and the right clothes, the intimations of a lovelorn ecstasy and the long sad underworld of depression. To this Mrs. Seymour adds the chic and polish of Hollywood's modern manner. In between the diffident sentiments there are little insets of intellectual interest—a note on writing novels, disclosures of political "awareness" in the author, anti-war demonstrations and cosy chats between the sisters on these lines—

> "It was a nicer world, that one which stopped on that hot day in August, nineteen-fourteen."
>
> "It stopped a bit earlier than that, didn't it? On that day when Gavrilo Princep fired his revolver in a narrow street in Sarajevo into which the Archduke's chauffeur had turned by accident."

Try that on your sister some time. I am no lover of fanatically "natural" dialogue, but I perceive a distinction between possible human speech and a newspaper article.

Christmas at Cold Comfort Farm begins with a reminder of Miss Gibbons's happiest vein. The title story has some engagingly beastly absurdities, although Miss Gibbons lays on her burlesque effects with a tiringly heavy hand. There is a good scene when old Adam goes round filling the stockings—"the presents were chiefly swedes, beetroots, mangel-wurzels and turnips, decorated with coloured ribbons and strips of silver paper from tea packets"—and for Mrs. Beetle "a bright new tin of beetle-killer." Cold Comfort Farm remains a good joke, and it is a great pity that Miss Gibbons has forsaken its goat-pistols and daft humours for conventional formula-stories. Her latest volume belies the promise of its title and dwindles away in a collection of professionally competent magazine tales. They are readable, well turned, entertaining. Any one of a hundred writers might have written them. They are the standard commodity of Fleet Street's glossier pages. And that, alas, is cold comfort.

DESMOND HAWKINS

THE FACE OF BRITAIN

The English Lakeland. By DOREEN WALLACE. *Batsford.* 8s. 6d.

Chiltern Country. By H. J. MASSINGHAM. *Batsford.* 8s. 6d.

Corn Country. By C. HENRY WARREN. *Batsford.* 10s. 6d.

The attitude of this generation to the beauty of England is curiously double-faced. We may be justly said to have discovered this beauty, yet we have done more than any of our predecessors to destroy what we have discovered; many of us have learnt to love it, to love it to such purpose that the historian of the future looking regretfully back to a beauty that he has never known, will be forced to conclude that it is only those peoples who do not love the countryside who are likely to retain a countryside worth loving. In our "rage" for the country, we have allowed our towns to burst like bombs which scatter their debris far and wide over the land, and laid down roads like weals left by the whiplash of civilisation on the face of Britain; we have crowned every hilltop with its villa, dotted every valley with its bungalows, so that the curious observer would conclude that the land, smitten by a mortal disease, was breaking out into an inflamed rash of angry pink.

Now all these things we do because we have learnt to love the country, and, since we love it, we must write about it, introducing it to those who have yet to be initiated, which brings me to the three books under review.

Miss Wallace's is frankly disappointing. Treating the Lake District less as a land of beauty than as a string of beauty spots accessible by car, she has written a motorists' guide to the Lakes. "To make this book useful to the greatest number of people, I have thought best to divide up my journeyings according to the roads; we can go the footpath way, if we think fit, but it is surprising how much can be seen from the roads." The motorist's approach throws the whole picture out of perspective. Thus the eastern valleys, Kentmere and Long Sleddale, for example, are rebuked because "they are one and all dead ends to the car traveller." Also they have no lakes, "and the ordinary Lake District tourist does expect his money's worth of water." "The ordinary Lake District tourist," is, I suppose, the person who clamours for a motor road over the Stye Head Pass. Wastwater, "our next lake," receives only half a page of description, presumably because it is difficult of access by car and is, thank goodness, also "a dead end." An audacious piece of walking is "to go right up the chasm of the ghyll (having sacrificed one's footgear as a thank-offering to the Creator) from big boulder to big boulder, until one stands almost at the foot of the fall itself." This feat has the additional advantage of enabling one to "forget hikers and their litter in the sublimity of nature."

Does not Miss Wallace know that the spirit of the Lake District yields itself only to the respectful approaches of the walker, that the assault by car is tantamount to rape and is in process of killing the very thing that is supposed to be loved; that until the track over Hard Knott and Wrynose was used as a racing ground for motor-cyclists, it was as free from defilements of the sense of sight as it was from outrages upon the sense of sound, and that by and large it is the motorists and *not* the walkers who, when they have gone to call upon the countryside, have left there democracy's visiting card in the shape of the newspaper, the cigarette packet, and the banana skin.

I do not wish to deny this book all merit. There is a good account of the economics of afforestation which shows that Miss Wallace realises the full outrage of the spectacle of lines of regimented pines in Duddondale and on Whinlatter. There is also a good chapter on Herdwick sheep farming. The reproductions, though good, are not up to the usual high Batsford standard.

I have nothing but praise for Mr. Massingham's book on the Chilterns. For one thing, he knows the country. He seems, indeed, to have walked all over it, visiting even those places into which, one is convinced when one comes upon them, no one but oneself has ever strayed. He knows, for example, Maidensgrove, "the most remote hamlet in all the Chilterns," and Bix Bottom which leads up to it through some of the finest woods in Southern England. Mr. Massingham, who is a connoisseur of rural crafts, writes fascinating descriptions of chair-turning and "bodgering," wheel-wrighting and hurdle-making, all of which are, or until recently were, carried out in sheds set in the woods themselves. He praises the balanced economy of a world in which each locality maintains and is maintained by its own industries, and shows that suburban immigration has destroyed this balance to the detriment not only of the welfare of the people, but of the beauty of the country in which they live. Thus when chair-making was industrialised, the demand for local timber fell off, the beechwoods were cut down or fell into decay, while the men who had worked them were drained away into the towns. Mr. Massingham writes much of the village churches that he knows so delicately and loves so well, but he can never forget that his taste for these things, already eccentric, will shortly become extinct. The last sentence in his beautiful book well conveys the nostalgia for the things of the past with which it is pervaded. "Let them," the angels upholding the roof of a village church, "be my last written memory of the Chiltern hills whose beauty of nature and of husbandry will, long after I am dead, return and have these angels as of old to bless them with their outspread wings. Now they are but

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antiquities, with nothing to say to a century which has been the parricide of the past."

I have one complaint. Though the reproductions and photographs are first-rate, I cannot say the same of Mr. Hennell's drawings. Contrast them, for example, with those of the brothers Nash in the Shell-Mex Guide to the Chilterns.

Mr. Warren's *Corn Country* expresses a similar nostalgia. Like Mr. Massingham's, and unlike Miss Wallace's, Mr. Warren's is a countryman's book, the book of one who thinks of the country not as a place for motorists to visit and patronise, but as the site of an industry, the most important we possess, that has been allowed to fall into shameful neglect, and, with it, the way of life that it nourished. Through the pages of his book there walk and talk a number of old country characters, Mr. Smith the miller, Hannah Freeman the straw-plaiter, who discourse to Mr. Warren and through him to the reader of the days that are past, of gleaning, of the various ways of thatching, and of Horkeys, or Harvest Homes. It is hard, as one listens to them, not to feel that in spite of its hardships the old life of the country, when men provided for their needs by the skill of their hands, was a richer thing than the country life of to-day. Like Mr. Massingham, Mr. Warren puts in a plea for small self-subsistent farms, quoting with approval Lord Lymington's contention that the "key to successful farming is self-contained farming that buys little from outside and returns all its waste to the soil." His ideal is a corn-growing England studded with small, prosperous, self-subsistent, mixed farms, whereas the current tendency is "towards more mechanised and more highly capitalised farms regardless of the fact that good husbandry depends upon an intimate service of the land such as collective, mechanised farming does not permit." The lesson which Mr. Warren teaches is that agriculture can never be considered just as one industry among others; it is the "foundation of our national health"; and "corn is as necessary for the health of the land as the land for the health of the people."

C. E. M. JOAD

DETECTION

Funeral for Five. By JONATHAN STAGGE. *Michael Joseph.* 8s.

Maigret Keeps a Rendezvous. By GEORGES SIMENON. *Routledge.* 8s.

Criminal C.O.D. By PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

How Briggs Died. By D. E. HARDING. *Harrap.* 7s. 6d.

Black Plumes. By MARGERY ALLINGHAM. *Heinemann.* 8s.

Ten Star Clues. By E. R. PUNSHON. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

The Silent Bullet. By PEERS ELLIOTT. *Robert Hale.* 7s. 6d.

Eleven Were Brave. By FRANCIS BEEDING. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 8s. 3d.

Funeral for Five must head the list, in spite of Maigret, because it is more lively and readable than anything that follows. Liveliness and readability are not always found in combination as many readers can testify. A smooth, pat style may become a trusty vehicle for boredom; while some of the lively books that come my way are so lively they jump straight out of my hands into the waste-paper basket. There is not a dull moment in *Funeral for Five*, from the first glance at the dust cover (where an attractive girl in evening dress lies patently dead with human teeth-marks in her throat) to the final chapter, where the last of the five accrue to the undertaker. Our old friend, Dr. Westlake, with his usual simplicity of mind, drops in to dine with his neighbours and spend a pleasant evening table-turning. The tables are turned with a vengeance, for before he gets home Dr. Westlake finds himself in the awkward position of having to refuse to sign his host's death certificate. Then the teeth get busy on throat after throat, and Dr. Westlake himself, dropping in again next door at dusk, lands a nasty bite. Even that sharp stimulus to his imagination fails to put the poor fellow on the right track; he doesn't even recognise the face that bit him. The plot unreels like a nightmare before the bewildered eyes of the doctor, who never seems to get the hang of the murderous family next door until most of them are dead. This is Jonathan Stagge's fourth detective novel, and the best he has written.

Maigret is good, but not quite as good as we have come to expect. The first four volumes were translated by Mr. Geoffrey Sainsbury into perfect English. *Maigret Keeps a Rendezvous* contains two of Simenon's stories by a new translator, and the difficulty of converting colloquial French into an English equivalent has not been surmounted. Maigret's method depends entirely on the revelation of character by the process of dialogue. He can talk to anyone, and in return make anyone talk. But in a conversation the tone of voice matters even more than the sense of the words, and it is the tone that has evaporated in this translation. If we are to appreciate Simenon as he deserves, his work must be translated with the greatest subtlety and not mechanically. Of the two stories in the present volume *Au Rendez-Vous des Terre-Neuves* is focused on a Fécamp trawler returning from Newfoundland after a disastrous voyage. The fish has gone bad, the crew have quarrelled, and the captain is murdered as he steps ashore. The atmosphere of a fishing port with its pervasive stench of stale cod is conjured up vividly enough to compensate for the simplicity of the crime. The second story, *L'Affaire Saint-Fiacre*, is far more dramatic, with a remarkable character, who develops under stress. The Comte Maurice de Saint-Fiacre, avenging his mother, rises to heights of Greek tragedy. It is, I repeat, a pity that the translation does not convey the full grandeur of this ordinary man transfigured by a spiritual crisis.

Superhuman Asey Mayo saves a girl's life in *Criminal C.O.D.* by making a 16-cylinder motor car rear like a horse. Apart from this astonishing feat Miss Taylor's hero is more modest than usual, and the story is one of the best she has written in the Cape Cod vernacular. A girl's body, neatly packed in brown paper, is delivered C.O.D. to Asey's friend, the police surgeon. A little later Asey himself is tied up as neat as a parcel with adhesive tape. There is plenty of action; and for once in a way the criminal with the sense of humour can be sought for outside the more rebarbative inhabitants of the Cape.

How Briggs Died is by an author whose name is unfamiliar, but the plot is none the worse for that. Briggs died in an ingenious way, and not in the least how you suppose. The style, however, is long-winded, repetitive and streaked with jocularity, with a facetious, posturing architect playing detective. If you skip along, you will enjoy the *dénouement*.

Black Plumes is easy enough to read, but not very lively. Miss Allingham has the ladies' disease of trying to write a novel on top of a detective story. The thinner the plot, the thicker the characters is the maxim—especially the female characters. We are given such a rich, juicy slice of the heroine in *Black Plumes* (the hero has "that curiously sophisticated sympathy which made talking to him a Rolls-Royce affair") that murder has to take a back seat. Indeed, the murderer's main job in haunting the panelled rooms of the St. James's Square mansion is to send the lady with long, narrow grey eyes and fine bones scurrying for support to those "square painter's hands, hard and full, like a boy's." The detective plot is clever, when you get down to it, but you have to wade through sentiment to arrive there.

Mr. Punshon has given readers so much pleasure in the past that one hesitates to treat some of his recent work on its merits alone. *Ten Star Clues* is sound and conscientiously worked out but devoid of inspiration, and Bobby Owen's deductive faculties never change gear.

The Silent Bullet is an Australian contribution, unpretentious, simple and unsophisticated—just as if 2,000 detective stories had not been published in the last ten years. A Sydney big-business man is shot in his library by a home-made bullet from an old-fashioned pistol fitted with a silencer. The pistol is impounded by the police, but bullets fired from it continue to imbed themselves in skulls. An obvious motive limits the criminal area, but the villain nevertheless is hard to pick out. Mr. Elliott deserves high commendation.

The latest Francis Beeding thriller, *Eleven Were Brave*, treats of the Fall of France, with old friend Granby trying to save the situation to the last. The thrills, the spies, the traitors and Gestapo are much as usual, but the account of the exodus from Paris must have been written out of personal experience and is the most exciting feature of the book. RALPH PARTRIDGE

SHIPS AND ISLANDS

Feudal Island. By DESMOND HOLDRIDGE. *Robert Hale.* 12s. 6d.

The Voyage of the "Kaimiloa." By ERIC DE BISSCHOP. Translated by MARC CEPPI. *Bell.* 12s. 6d.

The heyday of islands seems to have passed. The modern Selkirk prefers the summit of Everest, a Tibetan monastery, wintering alone at the poles or non-attachment in California. I can think of few islands which could be palmed off as the Isles of the Blest to escapists; and of only too many (and some of them considered paradises in their time) which have become isles of the accursed. We need say nothing about Devil's Island. For there are the South Seas strung across the Pacific like cheap-jewelled harlots; the harmonium groans on Tristan da Cunha; St. Helena is driven to live on the sale of its stamps to philatelists and pleads at the jumble sales; the Hebrides have to be evacuated; the Indies were lately rioting, the Orkneys are bombed, and a year or two before the war a German doctor's attempt to set up a private, highbrow Eden in the Galapagos ended in a typical suburban murder.

Claustrophobia is the chief malady of island life. The best islands are those which lie near enough to a prosaic mainland and are easily left. To be just off the coast, in the crowd but not of it—that is the islander's ideal. There is an enormous island called Marajó in the mouth of the Amazon—so enormous that, though I have often studied the map of the Amazon, I have never noticed it until I opened Mr. Desmond Holdridge's book), which fulfils the requirements of the new age. Marajó is only a few hours' sail by canoe from Parà, which is a modern city, and it is owned by great landowners, half-European, half-Brazilian, who have the considerable civilisation of their caste; and it remains a piece of the feudal past anchored off the mainland. There are many feudal societies left in the world, notably those ruled from the Kasbahs of remoter Morocco; but Marajó is an anomaly in feudalism. Complete feudalism exists on Marajó not because of isolation, but in close contact with modern commercial life. The island breeds cattle by the thousand for export and makes a respectable 10 per cent. on the transaction.

Mr. Holdridge went there first of all after the American depression; his second visit was just before the present war. He was naturally impressed by the sight of a place as large as three New England States and supporting a largish population of Indians, which had security, plenty, content, no unemployment or money. Why education if that leads to Goebbels? Why freedom if that leads to faction? Why science and progress if these lead to war? Mr. Holdridge suffered the civilised man's usual tortures. Here was exploitation—and yet it seemed more just, more humane, and more prolific of happiness than freedom. We cannot dispute with Mr. Holdridge. We can merely recall that islands appear to create a legend of virtue about themselves, from Aran to the Caribbean in its days of innocence. Without a strong central government, people, indeed, seem to thrive morally; their relationships with each other are as good as an Anarchist would expect. The balance is redressed by warfare on other islands.

The history of Marajó has one question mark. The burial mounds, which are the only native monuments, show that the ancestors of the islanders had reached a high level of culture. Their pottery and utensils were elegant and complex. The gift has entirely gone. When? Why? Why does a race suddenly lose its capacities? Contact with the whites is the most obvious reply; yet no trace of the Venetian glass beads, which were always the white man's presents, can be found in the mounds. Why does a race lose heart? Did the original inhabitants exhaust themselves by their resistance to the Dutch and the Portuguese? Or did these people change their way of living? Since when have the Indians of Marajó been cattle-breeders? And are the present inhabitants of Marajó descendants of savages who wiped out the artists of the mounds as the Berbers destroyed the Arab civilisation of Southern Spain?

Brazil, in some respects, is a vaster Marajó. A world war, Mr. Holdridge says, would break up the benevolent feudalism of the island, not from a revolutionary motive, but simply because the enormous demand for meat would break the system. Its efficacy at present depends on its indolence, upon no one being too greedy. In Brazil, this political question becomes more obvious. There are open German ambitions in Brazil. The Germans made no secret of them. Their propaganda sheets, taunting London, Paris, and Washington in news items, were delivered every other day up the Amazon on canoes. The Germans do not want merely with their great ability to develop the Amazon, which Humboldt had said could become the world's larder; they just want Brazil. The way they want it—well Mr. Holdridge, a good-humoured, intelligent, democratic American, says that listening to the talk of Germans on the subject was like listening to conversation in a madhouse. This was 1938. A nation, as far as he could see, had become insane.

Feudal Island is not a political book. It is personal, descriptive. He rides through the flats of the island watching the rounding-up ot the cattle, the miraculous lassoing, the barefoof riding; he hunts alligators; digs up mounds; draws the characters of his hosts. And he writes with humour and dignity. Perhaps, he says, the feudalism of Marajó is tolerable because it is Portuguese. The race has not the cruelty nor ruinous empty-headedness of the Spaniards, but is gentle, and in Brazil has grafted on South America its only real stem of civilisation.

M. Eric de Bisschop is a mad Frenchman. Madness in the English simply takes the form of doing what you like. It occurs to you to set fire to your nightshirt, as Squire Mytton did, or to run up trees making bird noises, like Waterton, and you simply do so. There is no professional vanity in it. It is feckless and amateur. The mad French, on the other hand, seem to be people who like doing curious feats with totally inadequate or fantastically complicated means. The French madmen are as vain as actors and fuss like lawyers. They have the madness and thoroughness of inventors and

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of stage professors. M. de Bisschop, a retired captain of the French Navy, wanted to sail, with one companion, from China to Cannes in a junk. They set out, practically died of starvation, and at Honolulu the junk was wrecked. *The Voyage of the "Kaimiloa"* opens at this point with M. de Bisschop declaiming in the historic present as he lies in hospital, after the wreck. But God's extremity is man's opportunity. The junk has gone. Why not go across the world in the traditional craft of Polynesia—the Polynesian double canoe? Que Messieurs les Heath Robinson's commencent! Why not ascend Mont Blanc on a tricycle?

It is no joking matter. M. de Bisschop did construct a Polynesian canoe, that is to say, a craft of two hulls joined by a platform which was controlled by springs to take the stresses. The springs came off an old tramcar. In the middle of the platform, that is to say, on the bridge between the boats, the masts were stepped and he used Chinese sails which can be got up and down almost like Venetian blinds. On this craft M. de Bisschop and his companion, Tati—a companion who had many *crises*, sometimes "lost confidence," and begged to be put ashore anywhere, even on the nearest waterless atoll—arrived via Australia and the Cape of Good Hope at Cannes. And they had built the *Kaimiloa* on the beach at Honolulu with their own hands.

The historic present is a strain on English nerves, but M. de Bisschop's narrative is fascinating in its nautical detail and quite delightful as the unconscious revelation of a frisky, jumpy and freakishly inspired single-track character. He has theories about everything. He is a notable aberration, and the exclamatory English catches his certainty and Tati's morbid breakdowns perfectly. He is one of the reasons, the book reminds us, of our admiration for the French, as they twang away on the four national strings of despair, fuss, patience and élan. M. de Bisschop has, in his peculiar and hare-brained way, expressed something of his nation's formidable genius for doing the impossible.

V. S. Pritchett

The Labouring Earth. By C. Alma Baker. *Heath Cranton.* 10s. 6d.

The outbreak of war caught us when we were changing over from nineteenth-century ideas of the importance of food for trade to twentieth-century ideas of the importance of food for human welfare (Sir J. Orr). Mr. Baker's passionate appeal is a symptom of this fundamental change of outlook affecting food production in its widest aspects. Mr. Baker's views, greatly inspired by the teachings of Rudolf Steiner and Sir Albert Howard, are backed by his own long farming experience. His main point is that under the stimulus of profit, agricultural production has been violently speeded up by the addition of artificial fertilisers with the ensuing loss of natural soil fertility derived from humus. "Mother Earth," he writes, "outraged by her exploitation, was giving them what they asked for—bulk—and was denying them what they needed—vital quality." And further: "You can produce your plant by the aid of minerals; you can have something that will give you all the outward signs of being a splendid specimen of its kind, but it does not enjoy a full life and consequently cannot communicate a full measure of vitality." In the same way as application of chemicals checks soil life, so "in compost we have the means of kindling life within the earth itself," and healthy soil life is the foundation of health in plants, animals and men. A challenging, and highly readable book.

An Englishwoman in the U.S.S.R. By Violet Lansbury. *Putnam.* 12s. 6d.

A book with this title arouses high expectations. In the wild exchange of ideological assertions, the record of anybody—above all a woman with children—who lived for twelve years in the Soviet Union, offers the prospect of a really "inside" view. But this particular record, at least, is disappointing. Miss Violet Lansbury started her connection with the U.S.S.R. as a typist in Arcos, where she conceived a great admiration for the Revolution. In 1925 she went to Russia and lived there until 1937, having in the meantime acquired a husband and two children, all of whom, it would appear, she left behind her in Russia. Her experiences are interesting and vividly narrated for the first two or three years of her life in Moscow; and if they tend to be rather small beer, to occupy themselves with the absence of bath-plugs (advertised as a hygienic measure), and with the details of shopping during the period of the New Economic Policy, no one should complain about that. For of such minor and domestic details is the picture of life in a new civilisation constructed. Unfortunately, after 1928 or thereabouts, Miss Lansbury either ceased to observe with interest, or—which is perhaps more probable—became so fervently Communist, so gleichgestaltet, that whatever she observed, she could not describe in print. There is in her book no picture at all of Russia after Stalin took control. There are casual remarks about the beauty of the Moscow Tube, and of the asphalted roads leading sometimes 17 miles out into the country; there are comments of an order as astounding as this—"when the people of the Soviet Union had reached a degree of prosperity *unknown in any country in the world*" (our italics). But of what was happening in the Soviet Union during those important nine years there is no clear account at all; even the disastrous early experiments in agricultural collectivisation, which Stalin himself took pains to repudiate, receive no more attention than a casual notice to the effect that some peasants, who did not fully understand the beauties of Communism, killed their cattle, and that this made meat and leather run rather short. This is a great pity, because Miss Lansbury, when she turns to describe comparatively neutral happenings, such as her father's visit to Moscow and her own scrap with an official Intourist guide who was being uncommonly silly, writes well and pungently.

African Hazard: An Autobiography. By P. W. Rainier. *John Murray.* 10s. 6d.

The writer of this book graduated in veld-lore under a stout old Boer elephant-hunter. In the early years of this century, this warrior had turned bar-keeper on what is still the malaria-sodden Portuguese side of the Rhodesian border. Ivory-hunting, he lamented, was even then a dying trade. "I've combed every elephant herd in Mozambique till I know the bulls by sight and they call me by my first name. There's nothing bigger than a fifty-pound tusk left in the country, and it's my last trip after elephant. The railways have killed transport riding. Now the elephants have gone. There's no way left of making money except mining." "And," he adds, wisely contemplative, "it takes money to farm."

Thus instructed, Rainier, a penniless youth, himself South African frontier born, turned accordingly to prospecting, and to pioneer mining in widely separated parts of Africa—Mozambique and the Namib Desert, Mozambique again, and—after an interlude of war, also in the Namib the Bauchi Plateau of Nigeria. His story is lively and very well told—except perhaps that the stupid profanities of the bar-counter, though quite in character, pall in print. His comment is also just: "The hope of gain was our ostensible urge . . . but I think that the real urge which drove us into the bush was curiosity—the wish to see what lay beyond the next purple horizon—and the game of matching our strength against the wilderness." Certainly the profit was not much, and half or more of these adventurers soon paid forfeit with their lives. The book is much to be commended as a fitting record of a highly individualist and resourceful age, not insignificant for the history of Africa.

I Do Not Think So. By J. B. Morton. *Burns Oates.* 6s.

There are several Beachcombers. One is the romantic, another the anti-highbrow. The third is the harassed journalist, always with his column to fill and the daftness of the news snippet to compete with. Of these the last is far the funniest. The best parts of *I Do Not Think So* start from some incredible *bêtise* of reporting, which may or may not be genuine, such as "*The Queen of Jugoslavia is a smoked-turkey eater, like Lord Castlerosse.*" The fantasy latent in such items encourages Beachcomber to soar; the Filthistan Trio, Mr. Justice Cocklecarrot, Foulenough (at moments), Mr. Thake and Mrs. MacGurgle are the result. These are as good in their way as a Disney film.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

The subject of pianoforte technique—its development through the gradual discovery of the instrument's incomparable resources of expression—is naturally seldom thought of by the layman; yet a consideration of it will be found to bear interestingly on various problems of musical taste. It is probable, for instance, that differences in the mechanics of piano manufacture (breadth of keys, weight of touch, etc.) were largely responsible for what seems to us nowadays the very awkward and unpianistic passage-work of Schubert and Weber and the later Beethoven—those enormous skips, the long shakes with subsidiary notes to be played simultaneously by the same hand, the levity with which the pianist is suddenly required to

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Liability for Acceptances, Endorsements, etc.	8,802,569
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ASSETS	
Cash in hand and at Bank of England	£14,316,969
Balances with, and cheques in course of collection on other British Banks	4,770,945
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Treasury Bills	6,460,000
Treasury Deposit Receipts	9,000,000
Bills of Exchange	567,732
Investments	45,627,522
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perform in thirds or octaves and at the same pace a phrase which on its first appearance was barely executable in single notes. The Finale of Beethoven's *Sonata in A, op.* 101, is a *locus classicus* for this kind of devilishness. It was moreover, the first of his sonatas to be written for the Hammerclavier, and one would expect the invention of that instrument to have tempted composers—especially those who were also virtuoso pianists—to begin by experimenting rather wildly; so one must look to the next generation for music that, however "difficult," really lies under the fingers. To realise this you have only to compare the final section of Weber's *Concertstück* with that of Chopin's *B minor Sonata*, or the whole of Beethoven's *Sonata in B flat, op.* 106, with Schumann's in *F sharp minor;* for before Liszt's expeditions into the further jungles of the art, others had discovered most of the arabesques which ten fingers can describe without a perspiring agitation ruinous to the general artistic effect. On the other hand, I never yet heard a performance of Beethoven's op. 106 which, however remarkable, did not give me that feeling of sitting in a car next to a reckless driver and trying to brake with one's own foot against the floor of the car. It is indeed hard to escape the conclusion that, superb as they are *qua* music, the last sonatas of Beethoven led composers for the piano in quite the wrong direction—up a blind alley from which Mendelssohn and Brahms never found an issue; while Chopin, Schumann and Liszt opened a gate on to territory which, cultivated and enlarged by Debussy, Scriabine and Bartok, even now seems inexhaustible.

Schubert was a particularly heinous offender in the direction I have been describing, because the transparent, lyrical, "innocent" nature of his music desiderates an absolutely smooth and easy performance. At first sight a page of any of his sonatas may give the impression that this could be achieved at once; but try it over, and the odds are ten to one you will find a beastly, though innocuous looking, snag in every third line. The posthumous *Sonata in B flat*, however, the recording of which by Artur Schnabel has at last been issued (H.M.V.), presents few of the characteristic Schubertian difficulties, while its themes are of a beauty and suppleness that lend themselves to the construction of one of the composer's most successful works in sonata form. As I have observed elsewhere, Schnabel is a pedantic pianist. This quality is mitigated in the present performance, yet there is enough of it to bring out the formal—i.e., the intellectual—side of the sonata; so that, extremely fine as it undoubtedly is, I can imagine a more spontaneously lyrical, and therefore more satisfying, reading by Rubinstein or Casadesus. Furthermore it is unfortunate that Schnabel's odd technique should emphasise abruptnesses, making dotted notes appear double-dotted and transforming semiquaver triplets into grace-notes. The Andante is a long movement which can only be prevented from dragging by "keeping it going"; Schnabel has preferred to insist upon its solemnity by taking it Adagio, which has the added disadvantage of making it impossible really to "sing" the very slow theme. This can only be done, on the piano, by adroit manipulation of the sustaining pedal, and Schnabel has been only partially successful in solving the difficulty. Taken as a whole, then, his performance is impressive without being profoundly moving. It is, however, admirably recorded and the repeats, which make the work far too long, are mercifully not observed, except of course in the Scherzo.

Turning now to the other school of pianism—that deriving from Mozart and issuing, through Dussek and Hummel, in Chopin and Liszt—listeners will find a perfect example this month in Louis Kentner's recording of Liszt's *First Polonaise in C minor* (Col.). Composed at the end of his middle period, this piece is in his most ornate, "Hungarian" style; yet, apart from the rather regrettable second subject, it is not vulgar; indeed it has more in common with Chopin's Polonaise op. 40, No. 2, than the key alone, for both works have an atmosphere of slightly sinister melancholy that would be better rendered by the title *Polonaise-Nocturne.* Kentner's Liszt recordings are developing into a series well worth collecting, and this one is up to standard, though the loud passages sound rather confused and are apt to produce distortion. The extraordinary pianissimo *Quasi cadenza improvisata* is faultlessly executed and will be a source of delight and instruction to all kinds of pianists.

Some mild criticisms of Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* which I made on the occasion of its last recording produced from Mr. Richard Capell an indignant volley of personal remarks. Listening to the new set by Heifetz, Toscanini and the N.B.C. Symphony Orchestra (H.M.V.), I still feel that, in spite of the famous moments in the first and second movements, the work is rather stodgy on the whole and built up hugely from (for Beethoven) second-rate material. This remains a purely personal opinion; but I doubt if even the most enthusiastic partisans will care greatly for the new issue. Heifetz's playing could hardly be finer; but the orchestral part is very violently conducted and the recording coarse, even by American standards. The cadenzas are by the Viennese violinist, Leopold Auer, who was, incidentally, Heifetz's master.

Far more satisfactory, from a gramophonic point of view, is the *Faithful Shepherd Suite*, a series of dance movements from Handel's opera, *Pastor Fido*, arranged by Sir Thomas Beecham and played by the L.P.O. (Col.). There is little to say of this music save that it has the reassuring beauty of all good art that is part of a tradition; it has, as Henry James said of Emerson, "the equanimity of a result." That it can scarcely be regarded as Handel at his grave or superbly vital best, perhaps goes without saying. The Pastorale—a seemingly fool-proof genre—has particular charm, but also, I suspect, more of Beecham in the orchestration than the rest. The recording is impeccable. So is that of Karl Friedrich Abel's most agreeable little *Symphony in E flat*, op. 10, No. 3 (arr. Carse), performed by the Boyd Neel String Orchestra (Decca). Abel was a noted viola da gamba player, a pupil of J. S. Bach and associated with the latter's son, Johann Christian, in concert-giving activities in London of the 1760's. That he was famous for his playing of slow movements no doubt accounts for the fact that the Andante of this symphony is a great deal more interesting than the opening Allegro, which is little more than a series of formulae—the kind of thing Mozart used to do on his head at the age of twelve.

Now take a deep breath and switch right over to the romantic world of Sibelius' tone-poem, *Pohjola's Daughter*, op. 49. The story, which is over-complicated for musical illustration, deals with the exploits of the Finnish Hercules and his properly cavalier treatment of the Omphale of the Kalevala. However, Sibelius has about five times as much musical imagination as Saint-Saëns and his vision of the events is extraordinarily thrilling. But I do not find that Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra (H.M.V.) give a finer performance than Kajanus: the old Sibelius Society recording is still the best, even where clarity of detail is concerned.

A new set of Ravel's popular *Ma Mère l'Oye* is always welcome. The latest recording, by Howard Barlow and the Columbia Broadcasting Orchestra (Col.), is rather edgy in the louder passages, but otherwise excellent. The pianissimo climax of the last movement is sensitively achieved. Another suite which will, one hopes,

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always be even more popular — Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* No. 2—still remains preferable in the recording by Goossens and the L.P.O. The new issue, by Fiedler and the Boston Promenade Orchestra (H.M.V.) is remarkably good at the price, but of an inferior refinement comparable to the difference between the Intermezzo of this suite and the Adagietto of No. 1.

English music is the poorer by the recent death of Frank Bridge, who was, I think, a better composer than is usually allowed. The quality of his musical ideas was remarkably fine, but, like many English composers—Sir Arnold Bax, for example—he tended to weaken his material by conventionality of treatment, as well as by insufficient attention to variety of harmonic texture. These points are well illustrated by the *Phantasie Trio in C minor*, of which the Grinke ensemble have recently made an exceptionally fine recording (Decca). Dating from 1908, this Trio is in the elegiac mood of so much of the composer's music, while the fantasia form permits him to place his themes in lights that would be excluded from a stricter composition. The *raison d'être* of this kind of work is as necessarily rooted in some kind of "literary" inspiration as *Pohjola's Daughter*, the difference being merely one of a much greater degree of vagueness. All sorts of musicians should find these records worth attention; listened to without prejudice, the opening theme alone, with its lovely modulations, can hardly fail to move. It is to be hoped that the composer's death may encourage the recording companies to pay tribute to his memory by issuing more of his works, especially the very fine *String Quartet in G minor*.

How soon Christmas is forgotten can be felt by listening to John McCormack's latest disc: "All thro' the Night" and "See amid the Winter's Snow" (H.M.V.). Already these cosy old tunes come to us as from the pages of a Dickens novel—as remote from the angular harshness and dull anxiety of our days as Esther Summerson from an A.T. McCormack sings them with perfect blandness and one catches every word; but his voice seems to be becoming more and more nasal lately.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 574

Set by Winifred Harper

I have noticed that Oscar Wilde has recently made an appearance as a Penguin. The usual prizes are offered for a piece of dialogue between Lady Bracknell, Lord Henry and Miss Prism on being offered to the masses in a paper book price sixpence (not more than 250 words).

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, Feb. 10th.
2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 571

Set by L. V. Upward

Obeying his doctor's orders, an actor, about to play Shylock, visits a dentist. In the waiting-room he mentally rehearses his court speech, "I have possessed . . . ." But the nearer of his ordeals upsets his memory; probe and drill, as it were, replace pig and cat as objects of repulsion. The usual prizes are offered for a revised version of the speech (not exceeding 24 lines) made under such circumstances. It should begin: "I have possessed you, doctor, of my symptoms."

Report by L. V. Upward

This was an "escape" competition. It was a general invitation, accepted cheerfully enough by a gratifyingly large number of entrants, to forget Hitler and all his works for an hour or so. But a few representatives of that hardy breed whose contempt for palliatives seems to be beyond bounds, dragged in the war by the scruff of its neck, and thereby put themselves out of the running, if a slight mixture of metaphors may be allowed for once.

The great majority of competitors insisted firmly upon addressing their lines to the dental surgeon instead of the physician, and so, realising that I had not made my meaning clear, I accepted this. It was a small point anyway. But I was, I think, justified in demanding a reasonably close parody, and here so many competitors fell down—even such veterans as R. S. Jaffray and Charles Furbank—that I had little difficulty in reducing the "possibles" to a dozen.

Gordon Simpson need not have apologised for his anachronisms, which were in the Shakespearean tradition; but when he swore by his hole-y molar (nor was he the only one to make use of that dreadful oath) I must confess I shuddered. Beryl Nicholson and R. Maxwell were both good, but allowed their rhythm to fall to bits in places, and Miss Nicholson's typewriter slipped up in the matter of spelling once or twice. A slight loss of rhythm also marred the otherwise excellent entry of Stock-Cross. J. N. Stoddart and Sir Robert Witt erred by putting their actors into the surgery instead of the waiting room, or so it seemed; but this appeared to be a temptation resisted with difficulty by most of those who addressed the dentist and not the doctor, which was scarcely surprising. B. J. V. L., after a poor start, improved steadily and finished full of running; but she made her effort too late to catch up with the winners.

There were four entries all sufficiently good to make the selection of the second prize-winner a hard task. Thomas Fry, I. R. I. S. and Harry Broadbent submitted work of a very high standard, but on the whole I think they must give way to C. F. Best, though I wish he had used some other word than "yelpings." First prize is for X. I do not care for his "You see?"; but I have no other criticism to offer. Judging by internal evidence only, I fancy we have seen this competitor's work before over a longer signature. Anyhow, he must discard his anonymity now to the extent of supplying THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION with his name and address—if he wishes to reap his reward.

FIRST PRIZE

I have possessed you, doctor, of my symptoms;
How by the pangs of Hades am I torn
To limits of endurance and beyond;
But when you ask me why I rather choose
This weight upon the flesh than to receive
Yon dentist's treatment, I will answer that
By saying, 'tis my humour: are you answer'd?
What if my guts are troubled with an ache?
Shall I be pleas'd to pay down good red gold
To have it chang'd for sharper woe? You see?
Some men there are that faint when forceps clink,
And some that shudder when they spy a drill,
And others, when the hing'd chair backward goes
Cannot restrain their panic: such effects
Excite compassion. See you why I balk?
Why he, that loathes the healing forceps' clink,
And he, the artful, nerve-extracting drill,
And he, the smooth chair's swing; are all, of course,
Myself, yielding without a touch of shame
To well-imagin'd fear? So, are you answer'd?
No other reason have I, or can give
More than this nameless, creeping dread I bear
Of him, whose very antechamber holds
In sick suspense, the breath of present pain. X.

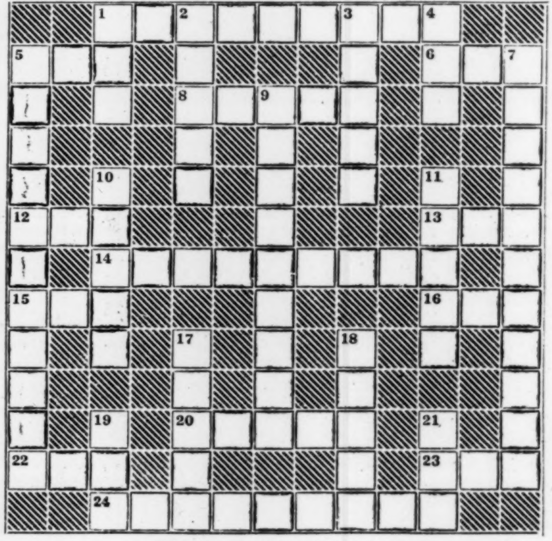
SECOND PRIZE

I have possessed you, doctor, of my symptoms
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have th' offending members straight pluck'd out.
If you deny me, let the danger light
Upon your practice, and your whole profession.
You'll ask me why I rather choose to yield
These ruin'd ivory castles, than to have
Them stuffe'd with gold: why I'll not answer that:
But say it is my humour. Is it answered?
What if this frame be troubled with an ache,
And I be pleased to give a dozen molars
To have it cured? What, are you answered yet?
Some men there are love not a questing probe;
Some that are mad when they behold a drill;
And others when the bit grinds i' the head
Cannot contain their yelpings. Now, for your answer
As there is no firm reason to be rendered
Why he cannot abide a questing probe;
Why he a sleek and softly-whirling drill;
Why he the fretting grind of steel on bone:
So I can give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodg'd hate and a certain loathing
Of being drilled and welded, that I say
"Out, out, damned poison'd ruins!" Are you answered?

C. F. BEST

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 17

Set by V. S.



The last week's winner is
Dr. R. B. Latter, 369 Fulham Road, S.W.6.

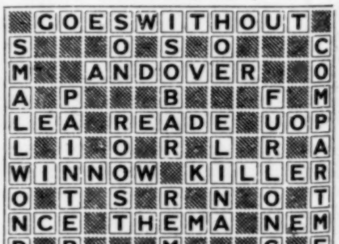
ACROSS.

1. On the side of the future foe of Fascism? (9)
5. I'm just low, doctor — nothing more. (3)
6. *rev.* No change for a shilling. (3)
8. Supplement on The Horse. (5)
12. Without a warden for the week-end? (3)
13. *Song of the Shirt* for Ascetic 'Arry? (3)
14. The old soldier and the donkey are academicians in France. (9)
15. According to nature, there's nothing in it. (3)
16. The boy's getting on. (3)
20. Put it back. (5)
22 & 23. Danger shared by many a private and pilot. (6)
23. See 22.
24. For shame! There must be something for us under the plate. (9)

DOWN

1. Fortune for the man who could keep his wife in the cellars. (3)
2. 'Tis plural with an s? (5)
3. God's got to go slow. (5)
4. Some results of sterilisation in Germany. (3)
5. Horse-drench for Mussolini? (4 & 7)
7. Swallow Ireland in a mouthful, Mussolini? (11)
9. What a plunger the gentleman is! (9)
10. Opinion. (5)
11. How to catch her naked? (5)
17. Lily wants us after all. (5)
18. *rev.* Sir William's gold stylo. (5)
19 & 21. Organ-stop, popular-make, parts exchanged. (6)
21. See 19.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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▨	P	A	I	N	T	E	D	L	A	D	Y	▨

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Company Meeting

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RECORD DEPOSITS

MR. FREDERIC ALAN BATES, chairman, presiding at the 110th Annual General Meeting of Martins Bank Ltd. at Liverpool, Tuesday, January 28th, said:

The main changes in the accounts are in the deposits, Treasury deposit receipts, investments, and advances. Advances have been much reduced, offsetting the return upon largely increased deposits. Profits have been affected by heavy wartime expenses and increased taxation, but, notwithstanding, we have been able to show a small increase. At £891,029, they are some £15,000 more. A dividend of 7½ per cent. paid in July it is proposed to repeat as a final dividend, again making 15 per cent. for the year. £100,000 has been transferred to the staff pension fund, and in view of the difficult times ahead we have considered it prudent to place £150,000 to reserve for future contingencies. We have carried forward £347,772, being £17,023 more than last year.

The bank's liquid position is maintained. Cash in hand and at the Bank of England amounted to £14,317,000, that is 11.55 per cent. of our deposits, which at the record level of £123,313,000 are up by £12,893,000. Quick assets consisting of cash, money at call, balances with other banks, Treasury and other bills, and Treasury deposit receipts amount to £41,267,000, being 33.29 per cent. of our deposits. Further, the bank's short term investments amount to £11,006,000.

We are taking a full share in financing the country's war requirements. Investments stand at £45,628,000, an increase of £11,456,000. This increase, with our holdings of Treasury bills and deposit receipts, represents funds lent to the Government during last year. Our total holding of British Government securities, including Treasury bills and deposit receipts, is £53,173,000, a large percentage (actually 43 per cent.) of our deposits. In addition, a considerable part of our advances is given directly in connection with the production of war material. This is typical of what all the banks are doing in furtherance of the war effort.

Advances show a decrease of £7,767,000, for reasons of which you are aware. The banks are eager to lend money, and are in a sound position to do so when the return to peace enables them to resume their normal functions.

My closing words will be in appreciation of our staff in discharging their duties in very trying circumstances. The arrangements made at the outset of the war with such care to meet casualties among our offices and to avoid interruption of banking service to the public have worked admirably. This reflects the greatest credit on executive officers and staff, clerical and manual, of all ranks, but it will not be regarded as invidious if I make special mention of the lady members of the staff for the way they have devoted themselves to their duties, particularly in London and our other large centres which have suffered from bombardment. Our fire watchers and the staff who look after our premises have worked untiringly. I have recently visited a number of our branches in areas which have had to meet bombing attacks and am proud to say that everywhere I found the spirit of the staff excellent.

We have now 607 members in the forces. We wish them a safe return, and promise them a warm welcome when they come back to their duties in the bank at the conclusion of a victorious peace.

The report was adopted.

PURELY PERSONAL

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By URBANUS

ECONOMISING LABOUR IN THE CITY—SUGGESTIONS TO MR. BEVIN—INVESTMENT TRUSTS

No body of men could be more loyal than the blackcoats of the financial City. They will, therefore, have read Mr. Bevin's speech last week with joy, for it seemed to promise them emancipation from their present dull routine and their enlistment in the national cause as munitioneers. Mr. Bevin's system of industrial registration by age groups implied that workers will be called out of non-essential occupations for training in specific factories engaged on war work. How much of the City's financial work is non-essential? Banking is, of course, essential, and the banks are undoubtedly training women to replace their men as fast as possible. But what of the Stock Exchange, the investment trusts, the discount companies and financial houses? The existence of a market in securities is also essential, but surely Government specialists (on New York lines) could easily do the work of jobbers in this period of market inactivity. And why should not stockbrokers have all their clerical work done by a central office, so that their male staff can be released for munitioneering? I understand that the Stock Exchange Committee considered a scheme prepared by their Share and Loan Department for the establishment of a clearing house which would do all the clerical work required by the transfer of securities. Why has nothing come of it? Mr. Bevin should look into this economy of City labour and see that it is carried out. Most stockbrokers, already maddened by the increasing number of Government forms which have to be filled up before any security deal is done, would undoubtedly welcome it.

* * *

And what of the discount companies, the financial houses and the investment trusts? My predecessor, "Cynicus," suggested that the discount companies had already become parasitic. There seems to be no good reason why they should exist by just taking up and passing on bills, except to exact a commission or levy which pays the salaries of their managements and staffs. The financial houses are, of course, redundant in a war which has no room for private capital enterprise. As for the investment trusts, they have been parasitic for a very long time. The old management trusts have long ago given up being enterprising. They first sit on their securities, and the first charge on the dividends they collect is, of course, directed to the salaries of directors, managers and staff. Occasionally they vary their investments, but to-day their job is mainly to invest the money paid to them by the Treasury in the requisitioning of their American holdings. Indeed, their present financial strength largely depends upon the degree of wisdom their managers exercised when their foreign stocks were originally purchased, for most investment trusts were large investors in the United States and South America. But for all the ingenuity their directors show, the management of the funds of these old investment trusts might well be undertaken by a central office for the rest of this war and the individual staffs dispersed into the munition factories. And the same argument applies to the fixed trusts with even greater force, for their management is much more restricted by the terms of their constitution. Happily, these fixed trusts stopped the advertising of their sub-units in the face of the claims of the Government Savings campaign, except one which is even trying to attract buyers by offering sub-units "free of stamp duty and commission" and free of the "jobbers' turn." This is surely not the time to spend money or to waste labour in seeking to divert private funds into ordinary shares. Mr. Bevin's department might well enforce an economy of labour in this financial field.

* * *

These remarks are not, of course, intended to be personal. I have great respect for the market judgment of investment trust managers. I would have thought that in view of many dividend deductions, and the requisitioning of a large proportion of their American holdings, the 1940 results of the management investment trusts would not be very cheerful, especially when the equity capital is highly geared. But I am agreeably surprised to find that out of the seven or eight reports already published only two had dividend cuts to be announced. Investment trust fortunes usually follow the ordinary share market with a lag, and if the latter is to decline, as I expect it to do if the war goes on into 1942, the outlook for investment trusts is not very promising. And in the first (but probably short-lived) boom in ordinary shares which will follow the conclusion of peace, the investor will surely make a bigger profit by holding a few leading industrial shares than he will by holding an investment trust stock.

BARCLAYS BANK
LIMITED.

EDWIN FISHER, Chairman.
WILLIAM MACNAMARA GOODENOUGH, Deputy Chairman.
HUGH EXTON SEEBOHM, Vice-Chairman.
General Managers: A. W. TUKE, W. O. STEVENSON, N. S. JONES.

Statement of Accounts.
31st December, 1940.

LIABILITIES.

	£	£
Current, Deposit and other Accounts, including Reserve for Taxation and Contingencies and Balance of Profit and Loss	535,946,063	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	10,968,613	
		546,914,676
Acceptances and Endorsements, etc., for account of Customers		14,978,292
Paid-up Capital		15,858,217
Reserve Fund		11,250,000

ASSETS.

Cash in hand and with the Bank of England		62,617,992
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection		22,682,997
Money at Call and Short Notice		25,908,700
Bills Discounted		61,822,742
Treasury Deposit Receipts		68,000,000
Investments		121,474,855
Investments in Subsidiary Banks (at cost, *less* amounts written off):—		
The British Linen Bank—**£1,241,044 12s. 6d.** Stock		3,723,134
Other Banks—(including fully paid Shares and **500,000** "B" Shares of **£5** each, **£1** per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and **1,000,000** Shares of **£1** each, **5s.** per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France) Limited)		2,556,434
Advances:—Customers and other Accounts	195,911,107	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	1,372,599	
		197,283,706
Liability of Customers for Acceptances and Endorsements, etc.		14,978,292
Bank Premises and Adjoining Properties (at cost, *less* amounts written off)		7,952,333

Head Office: 54, LOMBARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.3.

Company Meeting

BARCLAYS BANK LIMITED

MR. EDWIN FISHER'S ADDRESS

The Forty-sixth Ordinary General Meeting of Barclays Bank Limited was held on Monday, January 27, at the Head Office of the Bank, 54, Lombard Street, London, E.C.

Mr. Edwin Fisher (the Chairman) presided.

In his address the Chairman said, in part: Through the death of Mr. Herbert Leslie Melville Tritton, which occurred recently, a link with one of the great banking families so closely identified with this bank was broken. Like his father before him, he devoted his working life to service with Barclays Bank, and his intimate knowledge of the business and his wide interests, which extended to the countryside as well as to the City, made him an invaluable member of the board.

The balance-sheet of the bank for December 31st, 1940, reflects the incorporation in our figures of those of the Union Bank of Manchester Limited, which was amalgamated with this bank as from January 1st, 1940. Our reserve fund has been increased to £11,250,000, by bringing in the reserve fund of £500,000 of the Union Bank of Manchester Limited, and on the other side of the balance-sheet the amount representing our shareholding in that bank now no longer appears.

The total of our current, deposit, and other accounts has risen to the record figure of £546,914,676, against £461,376,448 at the close of 1939.

Strong Liquid Position

The manner in which our funds are employed is shown on the assets side of the balance-sheet. As the shareholders will see, our position is very liquid, due to the short-term finance we are providing for the Government. Apart from cash in hand and with the Bank of England and balances with other British banks and cheques in course of collection, which show increases compared with a year ago, the remainder of the specially liquid assets represents very largely money advanced, directly or indirectly, to the Government, i.e., money at call and short notice, which consists to a large extent of loans to the money market, mainly against Treasury Bills; bills discounted, which are almost entirely Treasury Bills; and Treasury Deposit Receipts, a new form of short-term security appearing in our balance-sheet for the first time. The total of these five items amounts to no less than 44 per cent. of our current, deposit, and other accounts.

This abnormally high ratio, which reflects the conditions prevailing as a result of the war, means that a larger proportion of our funds than usual is being employed in the less remunerative of banking assets. The Treasury Deposit Receipts, which I have mentioned and of which we hold £68,000,000, are issued to the London Clearing Banks and the Scottish Banks against loans to the Government. They are six months' maturities, the current rate of interest being 1⅛ per cent. per annum.

Investments

Amongst our other assets, the total of our investments, excluding those in subsidiary banks, amounted at the end of December last to £121,474,855; and showed an increase of £22,634,026 compared with the close of 1939. This rise is entirely accounted for by an increase in British Government securities, our holding of which amounted to £113,491,466 at the date of our balance-sheet. In support of the war effort, we have invested largely in the new issues of Government loans, and, as the shareholders are no doubt aware, we have given considerable support to the War Weapons Weeks held in many parts of the country by subscribing locally for National War Bonds.

The extent to which the banks are directly assisting in the provision of war finance is not always appreciated by the public. Apart from the considerable sums we are lending to customers of the bank for financing war contracts, we have, as I have already mentioned, greatly increased the amounts which, in one form or another, we are lending to the Government. To give an illustration, while our deposits have risen since the beginning of the war by £118,000,000, our combined holdings of British Government securities, Treasury Bills, and the new Treasury Deposit Receipts, have increased by £106,000,000.

National Saving: Need of Greater Individual Effort

Nevertheless, it cannot be too widely understood that the successful financing of the war and the avoidance of inflation can only be secured if each individual in the country will play his part and save all he can for investment in Government loans, even to the point of sacrifice. No better security is to be obtained; and the investor, by practising rigid self-denial, is helping to safeguard his future in the broadest and truest sense. The work of the Savings Committees has attained a notable success. It is no mean achievement to have raised from the sale of National Savings Certificates and Three per Cent. Defence Bonds a sum of £407,000,000 in just over a year, and, in addition, to have secured an increase of £121,000,000 in the sums deposited in the Post Office and the Trustee Savings Banks. Moreover, £300,000,000 has been subscribed for an issue of Three per Cent. War Loan, 1955-59, and £441,000,000 for Two-and-a-Half per Cent. National War Bonds, 1945-47, while £25,000,000 has been lent to the Government free of interest. These results, however, must only spur the community to even greater efforts, for, gratifying as they have been, the needs of the country call for more and still more saving.

Advances

The total of our advances has declined to £197,283,706, against £200,847,108 12 months earlier and, as our figures now include the advances of the Union Bank of Manchester Limited, the diminution is even more pronounced. In view of the great industrial activity, this fall may be surprising to many, although it has to be borne in mind that, while some trades and businesses have become more active by reason of the war, others have been adversely affected, and it is natural that, in existing circumstances, many borrowers should desire to reduce their obligations as far as possible. Moreover, in transactions where the Government is a buyer, there may have been less need to depend on bank loans as a means of providing finance, while the control exercised over markets and prices and the reduction in the stocks of commodities held by individual traders and manufacturers have lessened the demand for accommodation. The shareholders may feel confident that the bank is doing all it can to ensure that the credit resources it commands are employed to the best advantage of the country, and we are taking every opportunity, in line with the policy of the Government, to give all assistance in our power, consonant with sound banking practice, to those engaged in work of national importance.

Agriculture

The industry of agriculture has quite properly come into greater prominence as a result of the war, and the position of farmers has been improved through the steps taken by the Government to afford them increased security and more staple conditions than in the past.

The bank values its farming connections, and has always endeavoured to see that its farmer customers should receive the accommodation which their position justifies. There will, of course, be cases, which would be quite exceptional, where it would not be wise, even in present circumstances, for a bank to grant accommodation; but the bank is fully conscious of its duty to see that the Government's policy of increasing home food production is not retarded by any failure on its part to provide banking credit where it can properly be given.

Net Profit

The net profit for the year ended December 31st last, after payment of all charges and after making provision for all bad and doubtful debts and for contingencies, amounted to £1,525,665 16*s.* 0*d.*, which is a reduction of £259,214 8*s.* 5*d.* compared with the figure for 1939. This fall was not unexpected in view of prevailing conditions. The total of our advances, as I have already mentioned, has declined, and, in addition, we have suffered a higher rate of taxation and have had to meet increased expenditure, and these factors are responsible in the main for the lower figure of profit which we were able to show. The sum of £568,726 15*s.* 0*d.* (including £38,145 2*s.* 8*d.* profit unappropriated by the Union Bank of Manchester Limited) was brought forward from December 31st, 1939, making a total to be dealt with of £2,094,392 11*s.* 0*d.* As will be seen from the report, the directors have allocated from the profit for the year £150,000 to contingency account and £200,000 to reduction of premises account, and I feel confident that the shareholders will approve these appropriations. Our premises account has been increased during the year by the inclusion in our figures of the premises of the Union Bank of Manchester Limited.

Dividend Maintained

Interim dividends at the rates of 5 per cent. on the "A" shares and 7 per cent. on the "B" and "C" shares, less income-tax in each case, were paid on August 8th last, amounting to £598,844 2*s.* 9*d.* The directors now recommend the payment of final dividends of 5 per cent., making 10 per cent. for the year, on the "A" shares, and 7 per cent., making 14 per cent. for the year, on the "B" and "C" shares, less income-tax, involving a sum of £598,844 2*s.* 9*d.*, and leaving a balance of £546,704 5*s.* 6*d.* to be carried forward.

In arriving at their decision to recommend the maintenance of the dividends at the same rates as for the preceding year, the directors have not been unmindful of the difficulties under which business has to be conducted, the extra expense that has to be met, and the uncertainties that are inevitable in war-time. They have been fortified in their decision, however, by the ability of the bank to make adequate provision for contingencies out of the profit for the year and by the policy of prudence adopted in the past.

War-time Experience

The shareholders will recall that last year I referred to the internal arrangements we had seen fit to make in the bank as war-time measures, and, in particular, to the system of duplication of records which had been instituted so as to ensure that our services could be carried on in all circumstances. In making these arrangements, we have received much assistance from the neighbouring branches of other banks, and we are grateful to them for the spirit of helpfulness and cooperation which was so readily forthcoming.

The experience of enemy bombing since August last has tested and shown the wisdom of our plan of preparedness. In dealing with our special problems, the staff have invariably shown great resource and initiative, and the success of their efforts to maintain banking services whenever they have been threatened reflects the greatest credit upon them, as well as upon those members of our head office staff, who evolved our own scheme, which has made possible such rapid reconstruction of accounts. A valuable contribution to the maintenance of an efficient banking organisation in these times was made by the chief executive officers of the London Clearing Banks who have devised many measures to meet the emergencies which arise as a result of the war.

The Channel Islands

The occupation of the Channel Islands by the enemy created further problems for the bank, as we have branches in Jersey and Guernsey. Our duplicate record system again justified itself, and those of our customers who left the Islands have been able to continue their accounts with a branch of the bank on the mainland.

Italian and French Subsidiaries

One effect of the war is that we have been completely cut off from our Italian bank in Rome, and from the branches of another subsidiary institution, Barclays Bank (France) Limited. Shareholders will be glad to know that when the control of these banks passed from us the position of both concerns was one of extreme liquidity and was thoroughly sound.

Tribute to Permanent and Temporary Staff

The number of those on the permanent staff who, on December 31st last, were absent from the bank on full-time war service was 3,787. The gaps in our ranks have been made good in various ways. A number of pensioners have returned to help us, and, in certain cases, men who had completed their service on reaching the age of 60 and were about to retire have been invited to stay in the service of the bank for the time being. I would take this opportunity of thanking, on behalf of the board and of the shareholders, all our staff, both permanent and temporary, for the example which they have shown, and for the unsparing efforts which they have given so freely to the bank.

The report and accounts were adopted.

ALL ADVERTISEMENTS are accepted subject to the management's approval and right to amend or to refuse any advertisement whether paid for or not.

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning Service only. February 2nd, at 11.30. H. J. BLACKHAM: "REVOLUTION IN EUROPE."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, February 2nd, at 11 a.m. PROFESSOR G. W. KEETON, M.A., LL.D.: "JAPAN'S NEW ORDER." Admission free.

EXHIBITION

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Pictures by Living British Artists
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SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

PINEWOOD, Crowborough, is now at The Fir Hill, Colan, St. Columb, Cornwall. Home school for boys and girls 3 to 13, where environment, diet, psychology and teaching methods still maintain health and happiness. ELIZABETH STRACHAN. St. Mawgan 279.

BROOKLANDS, Crowborough 299. Pre-prep. and Nursery School. All-year-round home. Sound early education and training. Good health record. Excellent air-raid precautions.

HOMER SCHOOL, IPSDEN, OXON. Safe Area. 20 Boarders, 20 Day children. Boys and girls 5–12 years. All subs. Froebel methods. Qualified staff. Country life. Riding.

KILQUHANITY HOUSE, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire. The school in Scotland for young citizens of the New Europe.

HEALTHY DARTMOOR. St. George's Co-ed. Children's House, Harpenden, has evacuated to BELSTONE, Nr. Okehampton. A few vacancies, ages 2 to 10. Ideal surroundings. Outdoor activities. Music a speciality. Apply: MISS D. I. MATHEWS. Tel.: Sticklepath 43.

MONKTON WYLD SCHOOL, Nr. CHARMOUTH, DORSET. A new school for boys and girls, 3–18 years. Secluded position. Own farm produce. Principals: ELEANOR URBAN, M.A., HUMPHREY SWINGLER, M.A. Write to the Secretary for prospectus.

BELTANE SCHOOL, Shaw Hill, Melksham, Wilts. Boys and girls from five to eighteen years. Good academic standards. Undisturbed district.

LONG DENE SCHOOL, The Manor House, Stoke Park, Bucks. Co-educational, from 4 to 19. A safe, and perfect, place for children. Lake in grounds. Facilities include sound-film projector, pottery, weaving, printing. Food reform diet. Keenly alive specialist staff. Headmaster: JOHN GUINNESS, B.A. (Oxon.).

MALTMAN'S GREEN, Gerrard's Cross. *Head Mistress:* MISS CHAMBERS, M.A. Aim—to develop character and intellect, respect individuality and encourage initiative. Preparation for Universities, professions. 15 acres grounds.

BUNCE COURT SCHOOL, now Trench Hall, WEM, Salop. Tel.: Wem 172. Principal: ANNA ESSINGER, M.A.

THE BYRON HOUSE SCHOOL, The Orchard, CAMBRIDGE. Recognised by Board of Education. Boarding and Day School for boys and girls aged 3–13 years. Apply PRINCIPAL.

WENNINGTON HALL, via Lancaster. Boys and Girls; quiet area; experienced graduates; moderate fees. Chairman Advisory Council: Prof. John Macmurray. Headmaster: Kenneth C. Barnes, B.Sc.

ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL, LETCHWORTH. A thorough education for boys and girls to 19 years in an open-air atmosphere of ordered freedom. Principals: H. LYN HARRIS, M.A., LL.B.; MRS. LYN HARRIS, M.A.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, Wedderburn Road, Hampstead, now at Yarkhill Court, nr. Hereford (Tel.: Tarrington 233). Boys and girls, 4–16. Emphasis on languages. Special teaching methods. Modern dietary. MRS. E. PAUL, Ph.D.

SCOTLAND. Beverley Nursery School, Aberfoyle. A few vacancies for children 2 to 9 years in progressive atmosphere, special attention to diet and health, music and art. Particulars on application to the PRINCIPAL.

DANE COURT, WHATCOMBE, nr. BLANDFORD. PREP. SCHOOL for BOYS—evacuated from Surrey. Six miles from anywhere in heart of Dorset. Modern ideas. Good food. No Prep. Sensible discipline. Reasonable fees.

THE FROEBEL PREPARATORY SCHOOL, Little Gaddesden, Herts. Sound modern education for boys and girls from 5 to 14 years old. Inclusive boarding fee. Headmistress: MISS O. B. PRIESTMAN, B.A., N.F.U.

MAPSTONE HOME SCHOOL, Lustleigh, Devon. Safe area, two houses, 500ft. above sea level. Entire care taken of children from 2 upwards. Term or holidays. Home-baking, farm and garden produce. Write Prospectus

QUIET Area. Cornwall. Hollington Park School for Girls, St. Leonards-on-Sea, at The Bay Hotel, St. Ives. Recognised by Board of Education, ages 8 to 18, boarders only; 100% School Certificate successes. All games. Graduate staff. Parents accommodated. Open holidays.

VACANCIES for children 7–10 needing home care and education. Resident governess. Four acres and woodland. Health first consideration and freedom in happy home with own children. Home farm produce; food reform; pets, riding; no sirens. JANKE, Quince, Bishops Nympton, N. Devon.

OAKLEA, Buckhurst Hill (recog. B. of E.), now at NESS STRANGE, Nr. Shrewsbury, very safe area. Girls 7 to 19. P.N.E.U. programmes. Oxford Exam. Centre. Principal: BEATRICE GARDENER.

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If you are interested in short story writing as a profitable and fascinating hobby, you should not fail to get a copy of "How to Succeed as a Writer."

This booklet gives details of the highly successful Regent courses, which are conducted by Mr. Harold Herd, well-known London editor and author.

Among the subjects covered by the booklet are:

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SCHOOLS—continued

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MATHEMATICS coaching for Matric., R.A.F. corresp. J. B. RUSTOMJEE, 2 Carlingford Road, N.W.3. Ham. 0210.

ONLY BOOK AUTHORISED BY H.M.C. PUBLIC AND PREPARATORY SCHOOLS YEAR BOOK. Official book of Headmasters' Conference and Association of Preparatory Schools. Consult re Schools, Careers, etc. 10*s.* 6*d.* net. DEANE & SONS, 31 Museum Street, W.C.1.

SCHOLARSHIPS

TRAINING OF SOCIAL WORKERS FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:
London School of Economics and Political Science
(University of London)
Session 1941–42

Applications are invited from trained social workers for scholarships of varying amounts up to £200 for a one-session course of training for the Mental Health Services. The Course starts in October, 1941.

At least eight candidates will be selected. They must be between the ages of 22 and 35, and must hold a Social Science Certificate or a degree appropriate to social work. Preference will be given to those who are over the age of 24, and who have been employed as social workers since training. They must also be willing and eligible to take up appropriate employment, after training, in any part of the United Kingdom.

The scholarships are granted for the purpose of preparing students for psychiatric social work in Child Guidance Clinics, Mental Hospitals and Associations for Mental Welfare. The training has been specially adapted to wartime services, such as work with evacuated children.

Applications for scholarships must be received not later than April 1st, 1941.

Further particulars may be obtained from:
The Secretary, London School of Economics,
The Hostel, Peterhouse,
Cambridge.

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THE ENEMY'S PLANS

THE Mediterranean is once again this week an area where facts assert themselves against a dim background of conjecture. The military events are reassuring; the conjectures are disquieting. In Africa the Fascists are everywhere in retreat. Meanwhile, Hitler is pressing Vichy hard, and his threat to Bulgaria continues. We still command the Mediterranean, but the outlook might change rapidly if the French gave way, or if Bulgaria were overrun.

The chronicle of events in Africa is a tale of unbroken successes. Our army of the Nile continues its advance in Libya, a little more slowly than before, but from Derna it has marched eastward and taken what was once the Greek city of Cyrene. Our air force is still in almost undisputed command, and the only achievement of the enemy has been an attack by a German dive-bomber, which damaged, but did not sink a transport laden with Italian prisoners. We may confidently expect before long the occupation of the whole fertile plateau of Cyrenaica. Even more important are the successes of our small army of invasion in Eritrea. On its main line of advance it has taken Agordat, an administrative centre and road junction of some importance, and is pressing on past Keren towards the capital, Asmara. Further south, it has taken Barentu, which controls roads leading into North-Western Abyssinia. When these two advances have gone a little farther, the Italian forces in Abyssinia will be isolated and at the mercy of the gathering levies of patriots.

These successes fully justified the declaration which Mr. Eden made on Tuesday upon the political future of Abyssinia. What could be done to expunge a shameful chapter in the history of British foreign policy was done. It amounted to a recognition of Abyssinia as an independent State under Haile Selassie as its Emperor. Two phases in the problem of assisting it were distinguished. While the war continues, our officers in consultation with the Emperor will exercise a measure of military guidance and control. After the war, as the tactful phrasing of the announcement ran, the Emperor recognises that he will need "assistance and guidance in economic and political matters," and this will be the subject of "international arrangement." Abyssinia was at its best an extremely primitive country: the authority of the reforming Emperor over his feudal chiefs was often challenged, and he will certainly need help to organise education, transport and police, and also to suppress the slave trade. The wording of Mr. Eden's statement suggests that the Emperor will be free to choose his advisers, if he so wishes, from neutral States. This is as it should be. If America is disposed after the war to give political and economic help in the creation of a civilised Africa, the collapse of the Roman Empire may be the opening of a new and happier chapter in the history of this continent.

These cheerful anticipations imply, however, that our mastery over the Mediterranean is secure. The struggle for its keys is, however, going on in Vichy no less than in Libya. Hitler is pressing Marshal Pétain to take back Laval into his Government, and if he succeeds in this we know what to expect. Laval, it is said, demands control over the whole internal apparatus of government, from the police to the wireless: in other words, he claims dictatorship for himself. What is ominous is that Pétain dare not say No. He sends Admiral Darlan to and fro between Vichy and Paris to say No and Yes. Assurances go out from the Marshal that he will yield nothing beyond the bare terms of the armistice, and from the Admiral that he will not hand over the Fleet. But if they can be compelled to take Laval back, this pitiable surrender would rob them of such moral authority as they possess. Laval, it seems, has now his rival Fascist Party ready to take over, the *Rassemblement National Populaire.* The Germans can, of course, if they choose, occupy the unoccupied area at any moment, but probably their possession of nearly two million prisoner-hostages is a sufficient engine of blackmail. If Pétain is really cajoled into accepting a government of Laval, Darlan, Huntziger and Baudouin, it would be optimistic to expect General Weygand to resist the surrender of Bizerta.

We have to face, then, the possibility that the Germans may occupy Bizerta and even that they may acquire at least part of the French Fleet. In that event, they could with ease close the Sicilian Channel against us, and control the western half of the Mediterranean. We should then be reduced to the Cape route for our supplies, and it is doubtful whether the advance in Libya could proceed beyond Cyrenaica. The next logical step, if Weygand remains passive, would then be a march into Spain and Portugal, for the purpose primarily of acquiring submarine bases to threaten the Cape route. A grandiose plan on these lines might seem so attractive to Hitler, as a means of shaking our command of the seas, that he might even postpone the riskier scheme of invasion until it had been tried out. Simultaneously, he may strike in the Balkans also. The Bulgarians again fear an early invasion, and Russian opposition seems to have weakened, for Moscow now denies that it has any intention of helping the Turks with arms. There is ground in all this for anxiety. All we know for certain is that Hitler intends our complete destruction this year. The blows in the Mediterranean and direct at England are both parts of his scheme. We must rely on ourselves—but inevitably our hopes turn to America.

National Unity

Speaking to the Oxford University Conservative Association last Monday Captain Balfour, Parliamentary Secretary to the Air Ministry, made some significant remarks on the theme of national unity after the war. The *Times* added its discreet comment. Captain Balfour said truly that a Nazi victory would mean slavery for us, that Hitler's onslaught would be far more severe than anything we had experienced, and that greater sacrifices would be necessary. He added a warning against the view that we shall have no easy time during a period of post-war reconstruction. He agreed that " in our pre-war condition extremes were too accentuated at either end of the social scale " ; in the task of reconstruction the parties would have to remain united as they are to-day, but they would also have to be ready " to explore new fields of political adventure and devise new methods of execution. Our Constitution was unwritten, undefined, and flexible to meet the needs of the day. So equally must be our political machinery of the future." Such words are open to various interpretations, but one clear deduction would seem to be that, as usual, " national unity " means the maintenance of Conservative rule as the existing social structure. The very rich may be a little less rich after the war, and the poor a little less poor. But, both during and after the war Labour must patriotically abandon what it is supposed to stand for. This would appeal more to Socialists if Capital stood still. To-day, in fact, Capital is greatly strengthening its position; under pressure of war we are increasing the strength of vast monopolies. The great executives that controlled before the war, control now ; they work in government departments, but they remain private individuals whose profits may for the time be diminished, but whose power and position for the post-war world is greatly increased by their transference to Whitehall. Meanwhile the Labour Members of the Cabinet, confronted with the necessity of continuing with their political opponents for the immediate task of defeating Hitler, have become ministerial executives with little time to consider anything but the immediate administrative problems. In this situation the argument put forward by Mr. Cove, M.P., in our correspondence columns this week carries great weight, and the significance of the demand for post-war national unity becomes more easy to understand.

The arguments in favour of a prolonged period of national unity are obvious. So, too, is the impossibility of party warfare to-day. But those who have urged that important social changes can be carried out during the war have not, as Mr. Cove suggests, been so foolish as to imagine that there can be a political " revolution " while Hitler is at the gates. Our argument is that national unity—which in war time is sometimes called morale—can only be maintained if there is a substantial change in the balance of social forces during the war, and that so far from impairing efficiency such changes would greatly intensify the war effort by showing that the sacrifices are not all on one side and that, in literal truth, this is a war for purposes which concern the common man. We have heard this argument put forward with great force by Mr. Greenwood, who thought that Britain would be a Socialist country before the end of the war. We hold, more modestly, that the Labour Ministers are in a position, without in any way endangering Cabinet unity, to insist on their own point of view when carrying out many necessary war measures. Compulsion, as we foresaw, has become unavoidable ; but compulsion may mean greater efficiency and an improved status for Labour, or it may only mean to the workman the thin end of the totalitarian wedge. The same difference in approach applies to such problems as billeting and evacuation, to food distribution and half a dozen other current problems. Mr. Keynes urged family allowances as part of his original financial proposals at the beginning of this war. Was he not perfectly right ? Further, would not the nation at this time gain much and lose nothing if when it controls such public utilities as banking, transport and fuel, it took them over completely in the national interest ? Would not the Government give a valuable earnest of its intentions in reconstruction if it took power over the land and over the building materials that will be needed for rebuilding ? Public morale would be strengthened by such actions, and hundreds of thousands of people would be reassured if, instead of general promises, they were given concrete proof that we were building up a more democratic and not a more totalitarian State. On that basis national unity is possible, and if such a basis were laid it might continue for a period after the war.

Economic Notes (*from Our Industrial Correspondent*)

As shop shortages increase—and they are bound to become much more serious before long—increasing attention is being paid to the plan for restricting the total sum which any consumer is to be allowed to spend on unrationed goods. This plan has many forms. In some versions it is confined to unrationed foodstuffs, whereas in others it applies either to all retail purchases, or even to all expenditure of every sort and kind. Clearly, it would be very difficult to apply in this last form, as, given the present class-structure of society, people's responsibilities differ enormously, and any general restriction would have to be subject to a great many exceptions, and would call for a moratorium on a great many existing contractual obligations. Even if the proposal were confined to retail purchases in the shops there would be numerous difficulties. People newly setting up house, or bombed out and restarting, would have to be specially provided for ; and so would households divided by war conditions. There is the big problem of rich people's ability to make use of their servants' rations of expenditure, and that of people living in institutions on " board-residence " terms. Even a rationing of total food expenditure would involve great difficulties over restaurants ; for would such expenditure be included in the ration or outside it ?

* * *

It is easy enough to accumulate difficulties of this sort. But the fact remains that shortage exists and will soon be made much more acute by the drastic curtailment of supplies to the consumers' trades. If nothing is done to deal with this situation, there will be a scramble for the available goods. Where prices are not controlled, they will rise sharply : where they are controlled, the goods will be snapped up by those who have leisure to go round from shop to shop looking for them. To allow prices to rise may be regarded (in view of the Purchase Tax and 100 per cent. E.P.T.) as a convenient way of milking those who have money to spare. But it is also an easy road towards inflation ; and it has the additional disadvantage that the high prices greatly annoy those who cannot afford to pay them, but see in them a clear proof that the rich are still being allowed to have as many luxuries as they please. Price-control is greatly preferable to this—and assuredly the right way both of checking luxury expenditure and of milking the rich is by taxation or rationing, and not by allowing high prices to be charged. But the fixing of prices has also great disadvantages where it is not accompanied by rationing ; for, as everyone knows, it means that the goods in question are snapped up by leisured buyers, and disappear from the shops before most consumers can get a look in. That way lies the queue, and a very great waste of time just when man power is getting scarce. For these reasons, I should like to see, together with a wider fixing of prices and a further extension of rationing by groups of commodities lumped together, a total limit to food purchases of all kinds—probably with an exception for people setting up new households (or bombed out of old ones) who wish to lay in the " iron ration " recommended by the Government.

* * *

I have written nothing more about man-power this week, though it is still the crucial problem, because until Bevin's plans have been reduced to precision there is not much more to be said. Last week's meetings with the representatives of the employers and the Trade

Unions have set people to work in the various industries dressing up their own plans for submission to the Government. This is a dangerous way of handling the problem, without more central guidance than seems so far to have been given. The great danger now is that the Labour Ministers having evolved no coherent plan of compulsion on property (both used for consumption and production) will now try to bargain, as Trade Union Officials do, piecemeal. They will then be accused of sabotage, and thus be forced to make one concession after another. Hence instead of a reform of relative wages, ensuring tolerable conditions of work, transport and billeting which would render compulsion largely unnecessary, we shall follow the French example of compelling labour alone. A more tragic sequence could hardly be imagined.

The War Damage Bill

Any attempt to compensate people who have suffered economic harm as a result of the war raises such profound issues that it is not surprising that the War Damage Bill now before Parliament is giving rise to keen and prolonged debate in spite of Sir Kingsley Wood's impatience to rush the measure through. Members are greatly concerned with anomalies in the treatment of sufferers. We approve this concern for even-handed justice but we cannot help noticing that now as in the past Parliament seems much more sensitive and informed about inequities in the treatment of property than it is in the case of human beings. Now that wholesale conscription of labour is in the offing we hope that an equal sensitiveness to anomalies and hardships will be displayed in the House when the fortunes of labour are involved. It is easy for Ministers at the end of a tiring debate to sum up with the argument that it is inevitable that in certain cases there will be individual hardships and that they must give way to the public interest, but we know that as society is constituted at present powerful interests do not suffer under this principle.

The chief anomaly in the present measure is the difference in the method of compensating owners whose property can be restored and those whose property has been so severely damaged that restitution in the original form is impracticable or undesirable. In the former case compensation will be on the cost-of-works basis; in the latter case it will be based on pre-war market valuation. Members are rightly disquieted by the anomalies latent in this distinction. If a house which originally cost the owner £1,000 is partially damaged the damage will be made good and the owner will emerge with his physical property intact. If the same house is completely destroyed he may be paid off with £500, since although he originally invested £1,000 various causes of depreciation and obsolescence may have reduced its market value. If he happens to owe £500 on mortgage his equity is completely wiped out. It can be argued, as it is argued by the Chancellor, that to provide him with a modern house in place of the old would be gross over-compensation, but the fact remains that previously the owner had an equity and it is now wiped out. The clearest case is that of the owner-occupier. Before the damage he had a house in which to live. It may have been old-fashioned, but it had a physical value to him in providing accommodation. As a result of the war and under the principles of this Bill, he will in some circumstances be out on the streets with nothing. Whatever Sir Kingsley Wood may say, this is an intolerable result, and if we know anything of the temper of our democracy no post-war government will dare to sustain it. Parliament has a particularly great responsibility to the thousands of owner-occupiers who have been encouraged in every way in recent years to invest savings in acquiring their own homes. Absolute justice is unobtainable in this world, but, riddled with anomalies as this measure must be after all attempts at amendment, this particular example is so flagrant that the Government must give way. There will be time for this, but meanwhile there is cause for uneasiness about the immediate plight of some of the victims. What relief is now available to the bombed out owner-occupier? The compensation is blocked and apparently he must find accommodation with the 2½ per cent. interest allowed on his claim. Even if this is not subject to a 5 per cent. mortgage debt what accommodation can he obtain with this meagre allowance? The same hardship falls upon small owners who depend solely upon property income. Sometimes we think that the Treasury believes that it can discourage people from being bombed.

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THE FÜHRER'S EXPERIMENT

ARMIES in the old days went into winter quarters and silence fell upon the nations with the snow. The Nazis have discovered a profitable use for winter. They are not satisfied with preparing with specialised intensity for the onslaught on their chosen enemy. They also talk with a total disregard for all the maxims of the classical soldiers; they even talk about what they are going to do, and often they talk truthfully. That was their method last winter. How often did they plainly warn the Belgians, the Dutch and ourselves that they were preparing to violate the neutral Low Countries? We knew all about it, and week after week in these pages we chronicled their visible preparations and their only too audible threats. Why did they do it? They were all the time experimenting. They wanted to feel sure that they could anticipate what our reactions would be when the hour for the actual invasion struck. The test, from their point of view, was completely reassuring. None of the victims changed his behaviour. Not one of them showed a sign of realising that he saw the hour of destiny ahead of him. The Dutch and the Belgians had faith in their innocence; the French had their Maginot Line, and we had Mr. Chamberlain. The test had given the ideal results, and punctually on the day appointed the Dutch were stricken down. But the really brilliant part of this original procedure was that Hitler did, after all, secure the full advantages of surprise which he had seemed to renounce. No one, to be sure, was astonished when he crossed the Dutch frontier, but the scale, the speed and the concentration of power in this expected invasion took everyone by surprise.

The second winter is drawing to its close. Again Hitler has talked. Is he repeating the tactics of 1939-40? Not necessarily. This man is inventive. But in the past when a technique did succeed he repeated it again and again. It is highly probable that he is again testing our reactions to a public warning, and once more he may reckon on surprising us, not by the thing he does but by its scale and speed and intensity. The difficulty this time lies in the fact that the warning is complex, we face threats that may be alternatives. There is (1) the terrific submarine war plainly threatened for the spring. Next come (2) the vaguer hints of invasion not so precisely dated. But there is also (3) a threat in the East that would start with a march through Bulgaria, and (4) a set of operations in the Western Mediterranean that might begin with the borrowing of Bizerta and would include a march into Spain and Portugal. Many permutations and combinations are possible here, which we will not try to set out in detail. The invasion might be postponed till the other moves had confused us, but it might be hastened while our gaze is fixed on Eritrea and the Sicilian Channel.

Well, then, how are we all reacting to this complicated threat? If we can imagine ourselves in the position of a confidential Nazi observer, what sort of report should we make to our Führer on the reactions of the British, the Americans, the Russians, the Spaniards and the Irish? The last of the prospective victims is the simplest case to diagnose and we should take it first. Mr. de Valera has been tested with bombs and his reaction was perfect. Like the Dutch and the Belgians, he continues to rejoice in his own innocence. The Spaniards are, if possible, an even more reassuring case. They are absorbed in their congenial blood sports, and when for a moment the shooting of Republican prisoners palls, they twist the lion's tail at Tangier. But we should tell the Führer plainly that his experiment on the Russians, staged at Sofia, had produced an unfavourable reaction.

On the Americans our report would be balanced. We should assume that the Führer knows that this Republic is now irrevocably the ally, as yet non-belligerent, of the British, and we should credit the isolationists with nothing more than a slight value for purposes of delay. We should stress the significance of the fact that Mr. Roosevelt's electoral rival has chosen this moment to visit England. We should then quote some typical utterances by such spokesmen of the Administration as Mr. Stimson and Colonel Knox. In words their reaction under the experimental threat is in the last degree alarming. Anything less like the response of last year's victims it would be difficult to imagine. They stress the imminence and the magnitude of the danger that will break, they say, within sixty days. They declare that the whole course of human history turns upon it, as well as the safety of America. So far are they from being complacent that they expose America's total unreadiness. But the practical conclusion seems hardly commensurate with their alarm, for all they propose is to speed up the passage of a Bill which will lend armaments that can be decisive in quantity only after critical months have passed. Colonel Knox confessed his especial anxiety about the submarine campaign and the future of convoys. Reading between the lines, this observer would warn the Führer that the Administration probably wishes that it could venture to use American warships to convoy American supplies. But this it does not venture—yet. The Führer himself must dot the i's and cross the t's. The pace of a democracy is often that of its more sluggish and unimaginative strata. But on this he should not reckon too long; the blood temperature is rising even in this inert mass. The conclusion would be that he must not build too confidently on his submarine campaign. It may mobilise the American fleet.

Turning to the chief victim, this observer would start with the same distinction. On the surface and in words the reaction of the British to the experimental threats seems, from the Nazi standpoint, unfavourable. They say remarkably little about the submarine campaign, but they talk invasion with the calm confidence of men who believe they are ready; and they are getting out their gas-masks. For the thing they are mentally prepared, but what about quantity? On that point this conscientious observer, admitting that he had failed to penetrate the inner mysteries, might do his best by dishing up for his Führer what he could gather from the daily press. Here, for example, is an expert who discusses in detail the chances of an invasion. He anticipates, naturally enough, that air-borne troops would be landed behind some coveted port, say, Dover, and then, prepared to concede that the enemy is formidable and ingenious, he fixes a maximum figure; at the outside 30,000 might land. "I am not," our imaginary Nazi observer might comment, "in the secrets of our High Command. Perhaps the maximum figure is 30,000; it was about that in Norway. But I imagine that, what we have prepared for so long against England will surpass what we did against Norway ten times over. Probably the British are ready for 30,000 men. But if we could bring a quarter of a million men by air, are they ready?" In short, there is again this coming spring, as there was last spring, the quantitative element—speed, power and numbers—that may suffice to give all the effects of surprise.

Our reporter might then go on to describe for the Führer the political behaviour of this nation, preparing itself to fight for dear life and survival within sixty days. Has the Government the dynamic that would enable it readily to move munition workers from one town to another? Dare it order armament contractors to amalgamate their businesses? Dare it conscript young women to work, as it conscripts their brothers to die? It does not know; it is not sure. It fumbles and delays. It will try persuasion first. Perhaps it will suffice if young women are told to register. But it shall be only from 18 to 20 years. "This, then, *mein Führer,* is the behaviour of the British on the eve of their supreme peril. Plainly they cannot grasp the fact that all they cherish may be lost this summer. You charged me to report on their reaction to your threat of invasion and starvation. Here it is."

We do not pretend to guess how the Führer will act on the reports that reach him from technical experts incomparably better qualified than the agent we have personated. But the political picture is disquieting. This nation, this winter, is again the object of an experimental threat, as we all were last winter. In one respect it comes out of the test to admiration. It repeats all day long that "it can take it." Assuredly it has no fear. But has it the imagination that can visualise what may be coming? And if it had, would it hesitate on the eve of the ordeal to make any temporary sacrifice to save it all?

JAPAN PROPOSES

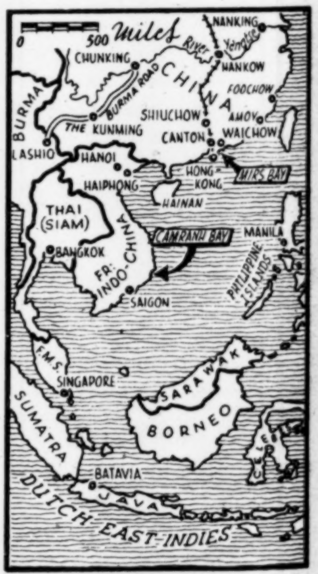
GERMANY and Japan both adopt a technique, never before so perfected by an imperialist nation, of disguising their real aims in such phrases as "a new order." Hitler's grandiose speeches may be featured in taller headlines, but the speeches made by one Japanese Minister after another—Arita, Prince Konoye, and now Matsuoka—ring a warning note across the Asiatic countries from the borders of India to the Yellow Seas and the South Seas. And just as their speeches have the same *leitmotiv,* their strategy is closely co-ordinated. It is probably true that Japan's southwards expansion policy depends for its success on events in the Mediterranean. In any case, the timing of the Japanese agenda has to be based on a consideration of the fortunes of the British Fleet in the Mediterranean, since it has been a cardinal point of British naval strategy that a war on the European and the Pacific fronts at the same time must at all costs be avoided. Japan therefore makes plans for exploiting any opportunity that might arise in the European situation, whilst Nazi Germany finds bases for Far-Eastern raiders in Japanese bases in the southern Pacific waters, and by sending out military and naval experts to advise Tokio. This strategic co-ordination is the most important outcome of the Axis pact, which was only consummated in a military agreement when it had become clear that America had thrown in her lot with Great Britain, and, like Britain, abandoned the programme of appeasement in the Far East. There are many issues at stake in this war, but in the military sense, at least, the struggle is increasingly a straight fight between the Anglo-American bloc and the Nazi-Fascist-Nipponese bloc. These are the main protagonists, but there are important onlookers and potential allies of both in the wings.

The Japanese have always two policies, or rather there are two aspects of their expansionist programme—one on the Asiatic mainland, threatening Russia and China, the other in the South Seas, threatening the British and Dutch Empires and America's position in the Pacific.

Chinese resistance has made it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve the first, so that there is increasing opinion in Japan in favour of settling the Chinese "incident." Mr. Matsuoka, Japanese Foreign Minister, in the Lower House Sub-committee last Friday admitted that the Japanese were now willing to deal direct with the Chungking Government, whilst the puppet, Mr. Wang Ching-Wei, has just told Chungking that he was ready to accept obscurity, exile, or "without regret even to die if only Chungking would reflect on its mistakes and make peace with Japan." Only a few months ago Prince Konoye, as Prime Minister, uncompromisingly declared that in no circumstances would Japan treat with Chiang Kai-shek. This change of tactics is partly an admission of failure in China, and partly an indication that Japan has decided to go ahead with her southwards expansion policy.

Since the Tripartite Pact the Japanese have already carried out several items on their South Seas agenda. First of all, Kwangsi Province was largely cleared of Japanese troops at the end of last year. These divisions were moved southwards, some of them to Hainan Island, the most convenient spring-board for any move in the South Seas. There are at least two army divisions on this vitally strategic island at the moment and another in Formosa. More troops could easily and quickly be added by further withdrawals from places in Hupeh and Kiangsi provinces.

Simultaneously with this withdrawal the Japanese began to exploit French weakness in Indo-China, and here Berlin, which is reported also to have advised the evacuation of Kwangsi Province, was able to give assistance by bringing pressure to bear on the Vichy Government. At the beginning of December, 500 additional Japanese troops and a considerable amount of artillery were landed at the Indo-China port of Haiphong, augmenting the large garrison already in the colony under the terms of an agreement with Vichy. Apart from the valuable bases in Indo-China—Cam-ranh Bay is likely to be Japan's next objective—this French possession is rich in rubber and tungsten, coal and iron and rice, all of them very valuable to the Japanese at the present moment, whilst the Japanese merchants can see the potentialities of this market for piece goods, machinery, electrical supplies and other manufactured articles hitherto the almost exclusive monopoly of the French. Whilst Japan has made strategic headway along the shores of the China Sea, she has been busy in Thailand (Siam), where a long-standing frontier grievance against Indo-China presents an easy medium. Last December Thai air forces attacked two frontier towns—Thakhek and Savannakhet. The official Japanese news agency was careful to report that the French artillery had fired first on refugees crossing into Thailand, thus diverting attention from its support of both sides.



Courtesy, "News Chronicle."

At the same time, Thailand began to make demands on Indo-China for the return of certain territory along their frontier. Meanwhile all French nationals were ordered by the Bangkok police to leave Thailand within 48 hours, and the Thai Consulate at Saigon—the only Siamese diplomatic office in Indo-China—was closed and its staff ordered to sail for Bangkok. The two protagonists, Thailand and Indo-China, are fighting an unreal battle in which the Japanese are assisting both sides. It was appropriate, therefore, that the Japanese should have offered their services as mediators and been responsible for the truce that is now reported. This suggests that Japan now feels certain that both Thailand and Indo-China have accepted her " guidance " in their affairs. Japan, of course, will ask her price—most likely the control of naval and air bases in Indo-China and in Thailand—which would put them in a stronger position to attack or to threaten Singapore or the Netherlands East Indies.

This, however, is not the whole of the story. Japanese propaganda is more ambitious, as a recent manifesto issued by the League for the Emancipation of South-Eastern Asiatic Nations shows. " Five hundred million people in Annam, Cochin-China, the East Indies, the Malay Peninsula, Burma, India, and the Philippines are now groaning under injustice," it declared. " The peoples of South-Eastern Asia have been oppressed and exploited by their conquerors, thwarted in their national development, and deprived of their birth-right. Their plight is simply deplorable." The organisation which is to emancipate the toiling millions of the East is supported by nine Peers, including Viscount Inouye, seven members of the House of Representatives, nine Admirals on the retired list, three retired generals, including General Hayashi, a former Prime Minister, Mr. Takwishe, director of the *Nichi Nichi* newspapers, and Mr. Kuzuu, an executive member of the Black Dragon Society.

Thus the stage is set for a southwards drive. There are two main obstacles—one the persistence of the China " incident," and the other the certainty of Anglo-American co-operation.

A military victory in China seems now ruled out. But Japan is trying other methods and, assisted by active German propaganda in Chungking, is adopting the Hitler technique of exploiting internal rivalries, combined with a peace offensive. At first these " peace offers " were obtuse, but last September both German and Italian diplomatic activity suddenly became more active in Chungking. Germany, through Ribbentrop, had long before promised its " good offices " to bring about a settlement between Chungking and Tokyo. Obviously, it would suit Nazi interests if Japanese arms could be freed from China and used in a drive South on Singapore.

What success the Japanese have had so far is still dubious, but the recent clash between the central Government troops and the Fourth Route Army, leading to the disbandment of the latter, certainly suits Japan's book. If a renewal of political friction between the Kuomintang and the Communists could be engineered and the Communist armies isolated, it would mean that the Japanese could localise the military effort they might still be prepared to make in China against the Fourth and Eighth Route Armies. There are also Right-wing Chinese groups who might not find this an unpleasant development. Forces are such that one would not expect Chiang Kai-shek to accept peace overtures from the Japanese at the present stage. He would certainly demand a much more complete withdrawal of Japanese troops than there is any reason to think Japan is now willing to accept. He is the head of a very lively nationalist movement in China, which has benefited greatly by the help of the Communist armies which will be opposed to any peace that did not drive the Japanese completely from Chinese soil.

Thus it is probably safe to assume that the one constant factor in the Far Eastern set-up is China's resistance, even at the price of paying heavy mortgages in Wall Street and the City of London. The Japanese might risk the final plunge into a war with America and Great Britain (for it is difficult to envisage one being involved without the other); she is pushed on to desperate measures by an internal economy which is nearly bankrupt, by the drive for markets and raw materials, and by her allegiance to the Axis.

But there is one other factor which Japan must take into consideration. Japan must either make terms with the U.S.S.R. or risk a struggle with her. On the Manchurian Frontier there is the Far Eastern army and air force of the Soviet Union, which gave some indication of its strength in the Changhufeng incident two years ago. Further, in December last, Russia reaffirmed her support for the Chungking Government and notified Tokyo that her policy with regard to China remained unchanged by the Japanese recognition of the Wang Ching-Wei regime. Mr. Matsuoka last week once more threw out a hint that he was trying to make a non-aggression pact with Moscow and there is no doubt that Tokyo is anxious to liquidate her disputes with the U.S.S.R. so that she can feel safe to withdraw her troops from the Manchurian frontier. Most of the rumours of a pact between Russia and Japan come from Tokyo or Shanghai. In any case, there is no evidence to-day of any withdrawal of Russian help from Chungking, and an independent China is clearly to Russia's interests. Nor if, as the evidence now suggests, Japan has finally decided on the policy of southward expansion, can there any longer be doubt in London or Washington that a Chinese victory is vital for Britain and America. In the Far East a logical policy would be one in which the Western Democracies and the U.S.S.R. co-operated with China. The Axis thrives on the lack of that co-operation.

DOROTHY WOODMAN

A LONDON DIARY

MR. WILLKIE'S tumultuous success was half due to the fact that he exactly lived up to the popular image of an American and half to his discovery that English people are exactly what they like to be thought. He could not go wrong. He had some bits of luck, of course. For instance, he came across a very genuine bit of democracy in one of the big East End shelters where the people have been allowed to look after themselves. This shelter is now run by a committee of delegates, from the twenty or thirty cubicles into which it is divided, which has transformed it from one of the worst into one of the best shelters in London. The chief Shelter Marshal was selected by the people themselves; his success seems to have nothing to do with the fact that he is three and a half feet high. His committee is eminently practical and democratic; the canteen is good and shows a profit which is spent on milk which is divided equally amongst all the children in the shelter. Those who don't want it are to be persuaded, if possible, to drink it. Then the question of cleanliness came up. What was the function of the borough? Only to clear the litter away. Well then, said the committee, there must be no mess in their shelter. And a levy of 1*d*. a head was enough to pay the wages of eight cleaners. More interesting still is the demand for books. Fiction is easily come by, but there is a clamour for serious books, especially among the young people who are organised as a group. A great chance for paper-backed editions.

* * *

The Ministry of Health have given me such a nice transparent shield for my nose and mouth. It makes me immune from your coughing (or spitting) and you from my coughing (or spitting). And if you say you don't spit, ask the Ministry of Health and they will tell you just how many germs you spit on to your transparent shield in half-an-hour's talking. You should wear this shield, it seems, in the Underground, where, at first, people may laugh at you harmlessly sprinkling you with germs in the process, and in shelters, where people are already getting used to the idea. I have tried eating in one without much success; to smoke while wearing it I shall need a very special cigarette holder or churchwarden pipe; but I can talk without interruption. Special " yashmak " shields have been invented for women who wish to enhance their charms and at the same time to avoid influenza. This latest protective device is not a sign that health is bad; it is, on the contrary, astonishingly good. All the experts expected shelter epidemics before now; one of the main reasons why they have not appeared seems to be that the shelters are not nearly so crowded as they were, and that the same groups meet every night and get immunised against their own germs.

* * *

I see that Mary Agnes Hamilton has joined Arthur Greenwood's staff which is to work on problems of reconstruction. That is all to the good. Mrs. Hamilton used to know a great deal about economic as well as political problems when she was on the staff of *The Economist* long ago, and, later, when she served on the Balfour Committee after the last war. But one swallow does not make a summer; and, from all I hear, Greenwood's staff is still very small (" one man and a boy " as he said, before he added a woman). No one inside the Government or the Civil Service as yet takes its mission very seriously. The idea still seems to be that reconstruction problems must be left mainly to the separate government departments which are responsible for the administration of the various services. This is the worst possible way of envisaging the problem. If one department is to think about housing and town-planning, another (or perhaps none at all) about the future location of industry, another about transport and electrical development, and so on, there will certainly be no reconstruction that will deserve the name. All these problems need handling together, in the light of a general conception of the kind of new society we are meaning to build up. To handle them separately will result in the merest patchwork. We need a new general pattern for post-war Britain; without it no one department will have authority to alter the pattern, and any imaginative Civil Servant who ventures to put forward projects which trench on the sphere of another department will be promptly told where he gets off.

A friend has drawn my attention to the new Order issued by the Ministry of Agriculture (S.R. & O. 1611, 1940) which, he thinks, is likely to lay up a lot of trouble for us all in the future. The Order authorises County Agricultural Committees to deal with applications to stop or plough up rights of way, that is, it authorises them in effect to plough up footpaths running across fields, in the interests of food production. I have no quarrel with that. To be obliged to turn your horses or your tractor when you have got half-way across a field because you have come to a footpath is an appalling nuisance to the farmer, who often fails to observe it even in peacetime. It is obviously much simpler and quicker to plough right across a field before turning, and in wartime everybody agrees that this ought to be done. But what my friend insists is important is that, once the path is ploughed, it should be trodden down again. The loss of food production due to the trampling of a single furrow would be negligible and the importance to the public of the continued use of the path very great. It is most certainly our business to safeguard rights of way which have been in continuous use for periods of time to be measured in centuries rather than in years. To deprive country people of their use now may involve considerable hardship and it would deprive the countryside of one of its main attractions without a care for those for whom it has become one of the greatest sources of rest and recreation of the spirit. Note that the new Order makes no mention of machinery for the restoration of footpaths after the war is over. It is not necessary to have more than the most cursory knowledge of the history of English enclosures, or the most superficial acquaintance with the habits of English landlords, to realise the danger which lurks in this omission. The Ramblers' Association is, I understand, making a strong protest to the Ministry of Agriculture, in which it is hoped that the Commons, Footpaths and Open Spaces Society will join.

* * *

It was like the Society of Friends to think of inviting a number of refugees to a free film show last Saturday, as a gesture of goodwill to those who have not been exactly overwhelmed with this commodity since they came to this country. *We Live in Two Worlds*, the first film shown, is a first-rate documentary, with Priestley drawing the contrast between the world which railways and telephones, radio and trade are driving in the direction of international unity, and the world of national frontiers which cuts across and impedes the unity. Switzerland is the dramatic meeting-place of these two worlds. Next admirable L.C.C. film, *The Londoners*, contrasting the London of to-day, with its crêches and clinics and open-air schools and parks and hospitals and housing estates, with the London of Dickens, and showing how the one has grown out of the other. That growth, the commentator reminded us, is a testimony to the power of democracy, since it rests upon the acceptance of the view that ordinary human nature, being decent at bottom, cares for decency, order, freedom, and good government. Odd how one had almost forgotten the fact, forgotten, too, the amount of progress that has been effected by ordinary human nature in changing its environment for the better during the last 100 years. Perhaps, after all, we are not quite so appalling a species as we had come to think; but it requires the Friends to make us realise that we are not.

* * *

Religion is a popular newspaper topic at any time; in war, especially, people are driven back to ask fundamental questions and want, above all, the reassurance that the unpleasant appearance of the world is not the whole of reality. So I saw no particular justification for my friend's witticism:

How odd
Of God
To choose
The News.

The only criticism I had of the *News Chronicle* for starting a series on God and the War is that they might well have been rather less conventional in their handling of the subject. Why not the "Devil and the War?" I believe he has more to do with it. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to X.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

General Ironside has taken the title of Lord Ironside of Archangel.—News item.

"Debrett's Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage and Companionage," with its 3,000 pages bound in the familiar red and gold, seems a solid and a vivid pledge of the stability of our institutions under whatever conditions of storm and stress.—*Observer*.

We in Britain like Mr. Willkie even before knowing him. There is something basically magnificent about his reply to a question put to him during the election by a battery of newspaper reporters:

"Are you in favour of aiding Britain in this war?"

Willkie looked them straight in the eye. "Yes," he said.—"Atticus" in the *Sunday Times*.

I found that better-off people had many more difficulties than working class women. They told me how difficult it was not to be able to 'phone and get what they wanted.—Lord Woolton reported in the *Manchester Guardian*.

You Sleep Soundly when you live at Park West. A few flats available to persons of good social standing.—Advt. in *Sunday Times*.

CHERCHEZ LA FEMME

(After Austin Dobson.)

WHEN the fall of France was brewing,
Belle comtesse,
Did you work for her undoing
With success?
Were her strong men all too human,
Premier R and Monsieur D?
They who choose to "find the woman"
Find yourself, Comtesse de P
(So disguised for *politesse*).
Did you mix, with skill supreme,
Statecraft with *la vie intime*
As in *l'ancien régime*,
Belle comtesse?

Had the Cabinet *une crise*
Every time you staged a breeze
With your rival, *la marquise*,
Eh, *comtesse?*
Were you to *la France* a pain?
Were you Monsieur R's *migraine?*
Did he rule and did you reign,
Belle comtesse?
Were you merely in due season
Used by master-minds of treason,
France fell, but were you the reason,
Belle comtesse?

In her tale of woe and grief,
Belle comtesse,
You appear as light relief,
More or less;
Were the ills of France, past cure,
Insufficient, to be sure?
Must we add to these *l'amour*,
Belle comtesse? SAGITTARIUS

BOURGEOIS ETHICS

I HAVE in front of me two books written by ex-members of the Communist fold. They are rare books; for most of those who have once signed on the Party line can never again recover their balance or their perspective when the support of infallibility has given way. None are so bitter against the Church, as those who have left it; and none are so obsessed with the necessity of explaining their past and justifying their present. Both Mr. Koestler, who was a member of the Party, and Mr. Strachey, who though not a member was the most influential exponent of its doctrines in this country, have escaped this bitterness and self-exculpation. Neither had lost his intellectual integrity. Mr. Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* (Cape 8s.) is one of the few books written in this epoch which will survive it. It is written from terrible experience, from knowledge of the men whose struggles of mind and body he describes. Apart from its sociological importance, it is written with a subtlety and an economy which class it as great literature. I have read it twice without feeling that I have learnt more than half of what it has to offer me. Mr. Strachey's *A Faith to Fight For* (Gollancz 6s.) is an eloquent book which restates a faith which has always in reality been the author's. Mr. Strachey has always been, and is, a Socialist. By that in a sentence he means, one who believes first that the hope of men consists in the state of mind that puts above everything else truth and love. He uses these words boldly and without affectation. Truth, as he sees it, is the difficult effort to understand reality, and he sees it frustrated by two forces. The first force is common to us all—the tendency to prefer what is immediately comfortable and believe what is pleasant. The second is the natural desire of those in power to reject truth and suppress its advocates as soon as their conclusions demand social changes which are incompatible with the existing order. Love, that is, the organised effort to co-operate on terms of respect and equality instead of to seek power at the expense of others, is an equally necessary and ultimate value. I should say in defence of Mr. Strachey's various changes of party allegiance that he minded first and always about these values and attached himself to parties, rather naively perhaps, in the belief that he would find them at least vaguely but persistently seeking the goal of a society in which these ideas were embodied. In 1931 he despaired of the Labour Party; he quickly parted company with the New Party when its direction was obviously Fascist. He set himself to the study of economics and decided that a reformed capitalism was impossible. He rejected Communism only when its attitude in the war convinced him that it had become an ally of the Nazi power which openly and deliberately sets out by force and propaganda to root out the very ideas of truth and love as social values and which offers instead the concepts of racial domination and the slavery of the conquered. He sees, I believe correctly, that the basic struggle of our age is against those propertied interests which at some point decide that to maintain their power and privilege, they must destroy the very idea of Socialism. He believes that with the resources of modern machines and propaganda, the Nazis may actually succeed, if British resistance fails, in wiping out the whole tradition of science and Christianity, which are woven into the fabric of Western civilisation. He believes that it would be better for every city in Europe to be destroyed than for our children to be educated by men who hold the ancient faith that the *herren-folk* must dominate a world of slaves, that free thought must be extirpated, that war is good and that love must be restricted to one group. He accuses Pétain of the great heresy of thinking that to save Chartres Cathedral from the bomber is more important than the faith that might be preached from its ruins. But he does not make the mistake of thinking that we have no potential Nazis in England; indeed, he fears their triumph, and for England a similar fate to that of France if we remain, like France, a country united only by tradition and without a faith as strong as that of the Nazis. He prophesies both military and spiritual victory, provided that in the test of war we can begin that social transformation which every servant of truth and love knows to be necessary. Here is an unorthodox sermon preached by a crusader who knows what he is fighting for.

Curiously enough, though there is no word of the war, and no sermon preached in Mr. Koestler's book, I believe that the upshot of his thinking is not very different from Mr. Strachey's. Mr. Koestler approaches the problem of ends and means, of love and truth and social organisation, through the thoughts of an old Bolshevik, Rubashov, as he awaits death in a G.P.U. prison. He believed many years ago that the answer to the eternal question of right and wrong and ends and means would be solved for him when he joined the Communist Party. The argument was simple enough. He held, as philosophers of all ages have held, that the ideal society is communistic; the object is to remove the unnecessary misery in the world; to establish the greatest happiness for the greatest number. That meant the destruction of capitalism which had played its part in social development, and which now prevents that socialist basis in which the flowers of truth and love (to use Mr. Strachey's words) could flourish. Communism was the promised land, the Church awaited his loyal adherence and unquestioning obedience. He had served loyally and had tried not to question. The end was so incomparably great that it justified all means. The humble worker in the party had not to know the whole pattern: "when the existence of the Church is threatened she is released from the commandments of reality. With unity as the end, the use of every means is sanctified, even cunning, treachery, violence, simony, prison, death. For all order is for the sake of the community and the individual must be sacrificed to the common good." These are the words, not of Rubashov, or even of Stalin; they are quoted from a fifteenth-century bishop, but they are the faith of every good Communist. Obediently Rubashov had denounced to the Nazis an earnest young comrade whose leaflets conformed to his private judgment of the party's needs in Germany and departed from the line laid down in Moscow; obediently he had accepted as necessary the suicide of a Communist leader who had believed that Bolshevik Russia was loyally co-operating in the effort to stop a war, and whose life was smashed when Rubashov instructed him that, though Russia was saying this publicly, Party instructions were to let armaments through to the aggressor. Further, to preserve his right to work in the Party, he had allowed his secretary and mistress to die in the hands of the G.P.U. rather than say the word that would have saved her. He had believed that he had thrown all the old ethical ballast overboard. But pity defeated him. He had come to doubt his own or rather the party's infallibility. Unconsciously, he had ceased to talk of We, including himself in the party, and begun to talk of I and They. He writes in prison:

> As we have thrown overboard all conventions and rules of cricket-morality, our sole guiding principle is that of consequent logic. We are under the terrible compulsion to follow our thought down to its final consequence and to act in accordance to it. We are sailing without ballast; therefore each touch on the helm is a matter of life or death.
>
> A short time ago, our leading agriculturist, B., was shot with thirty of his collaborators because he maintained the opinion that nitrate artificial manure was superior to potash. No. 1 is all for potash; therefore B. and the thirty had to be liquidated as *saboteurs*. In a nationally centralised agriculture, the alternative of nitrate or potash is of enormous importance; it can decide the issue of the next war. If No. 1 was in the right, history will absolve him, and the execution of the thirty-one men will be a mere bagatelle. If he was wrong. . . .
>
> It is that alone that matters; who is objectively in the right. The cricket-moralists are agitated by quite another problem: whether B. was subjectively in good faith when he recommended nitrogen. If he was not, according to their ethics he should be shot, even if it should subsequently be shown that nitrogen would have been better after all. If he was in good faith, then he should be acquitted and allowed to continue making propaganda for nitrate, even if the country should be ruined by it. . . .
>
> That is, of course, complete nonsense. For us the question of subjective good faith is of no interest. He who is in the wrong must pay; he who is in the right will be absolved. That is the law of historical credit; it was our law.

But he was not sure. Perhaps. Perhaps Number 1 (Stalin's name is never mentioned) was right after all. When the final test came he was asked not only to recant his oppositional tendencies (he had already done that twice), but to confess to monstrous nonsense about a plot to kill Number 1, it was this doubt that defeated him. He had no deep assurance of an alternative philosophy. He had abandoned the god of pity and love and could not find him when he sought. He had been tortured by the Nazis and could withstand it; he could even have withstood the horrors of a G.P.U. prison, which are more mental than physical, and which could only be described by a man like Mr. Koestler, who has himself waited for months for execution in a Fascist cell, and who has comrades who were imprisoned with Rubashov. He might even have withstood the deprivation of sleep and the torture of night questioning under a fierce light that confused his mind and wore down resistance—he might even have withstood these on which his young G.P.U. inquisitor relied, if his resistance had not already been broken by the shrewd questions of an old comrade of the Revolution, who recalled him to his original vows and his faith that for the cause of Communism all means are justified. That doubt about the infallibility of Number 1 betrayed him in the end. He confessed to the ludicrous lies demanded of him because it was easiest to give in to the argument that the last service he could render to the Party and the cause was to surrender himself as an example of the traitors who were sabotaging production. Better for the proletariat to blame saboteurs than the inefficiency of the Soviet Government.

Fanaticism is evil because it is ignorant. We do not know enough to have the right to torture and kill in order to achieve an imagined end; a fanatical utilitarianism may be as evil as any other sect which holds it has the whole truth and which never listens to Cromwell's prayer: "I beseech you in the bowels of Christ, think that ye may be mistaken." If, indeed, by killing a thousand or a million people we could found Utopia, then the end would justify the means, but we do not know in what happiness consists, how it is to be organised, and in the State we found every murder that has gone to its making will take its toll of the happiness we strive to create. There is no separating ends and means, for the means shape the ends.

For the Nazi this problem does not arise. The end is a State in which a myth contradicted by science and deliberately stultifying is universally inculcated as a substitute for truth. A State in which no problem of love arises because by definition there must be no co-operation between slave and ruler. To build a State, even very partially on love and truth, must be the work of generations, and the result of accumulated wisdom. Men have too long dreamt of a sudden transformation, first to a Kingdom of Heaven, and then, as science took the place of religion, to the Kingdom of God on earth.

Mr. Strachey is confident that it is our duty to-day to fight both physically and mentally lest truth and love are crushed out into a sphere in which they can no longer be effective; and I agree with him that we shall not win that battle unless there are some among us who strive all the time, and in all circumstances, to remind ourselves that those are the ideals for which we are pledged to fight. Otherwise in the battle we may fall into the folly of thinking that because we kill people we kill their ideas, unless we have another stronger faith to take their place. Social harmony does not come to Russia because aristocrats, capitalists, kulaks, saboteurs, dissident Communists, bureaucrats—the list can always go on—are successfully liquidated, nor will Europe be one stage nearer peace if we merely defeat the Nazis, without defeating those in our midst who believe in the Fascist ideal, or ourselves having a clear solution to the problem they have solved by the simple formula of *herren-folk* and slaves.

There is one other consideration that is useful to me. John Strachey somewhere remarks that if the Nazis were to win this war all the progress of the last thousand years would be wasted. It would indeed mean a new Dark Ages, but I think he states the case wrongly. I doubt whether even with the resources of destruction and of propaganda at the disposal of the Nazis it would be possible permanently to establish and maintain a slave economy in the modern world. It is theoretically possible; Mr. Wells long ago foresaw it in *The Sleeper Awakes*, and Mr. Aldous Huxley amplified that conception with great ingenuity in the *Brave New World*. Even so, I should not agree with Mr. Strachey when he says that our struggle to make love and truth prevail has been in vain. For some things are valuable in themselves. Certain states of mind are valuable, not for the results they produce, but intrinsically. The reason why it is worth while striving for a new social order is that in that order people would have more chance of being happy, of enjoying beauty, and of being on friendly and co-operative terms with their neighbours. Man is a mammal who has somehow got hold of this notion of love and truth, and every manifestation of it, individually and socially, is his triumph. Since these conceptions are within him, no society will altogether blot them out, nor has any development of them at any stage of history been without value. They are, after all, that for which he exists. KINGSLEY MARTIN

TEA-LEAVES

I READ the other day an interview with an expert who maintained that used tea-leaves should be kept and dried and that a better cup of tea could be made from the second brewing than from the first. I forget whether any special process was needed for drying them or whether, according to the expert, the leaves could be dried over and over again and put back into the pot, giving better results every time. But his theory fascinated me not only because it was an argument for economy but because it suggested how vast the reserves of wealth may be in things that we have been wasting for generations.

It is also interesting to discover that, after we have been taking for granted that waste makes for luxury, it merely condemns us to inferior living. Perhaps the reason why tea is on the whole so mediocre a drink is that in the best circles it is always made with tea fresh from the caddy. The Chinese, I have heard it said, look on the first brew of tea as a mere matter of washing the leaves, and, having thrown the water away, refill the pot in order to obtain a cup of tea that is fit to drink. If this is true it makes one wonder whether the chief thing to avoid in making tea may not be the use of fresh tea from the caddy. Not that this is the whole secret, however. I am sure that, when I was a lodger in Pimlico, my landlady never used fresh tea-leaves. Unfortunately, she made the mistake of not drying the leaves. She merely left the old wet leaves at the bottom of the teapot, and morning after morning poured fresh water, sometimes boiling and sometimes not, on them. When the tea finally lost any pretence of colour, I think she mixed it with coffee grounds from the coffee-pots of other lodgers. Anyhow that is what after the first three weeks it tasted like. I should have preferred even tea made from fresh leaves in comparison.

To be quite honest, I have often enjoyed tea made from fresh leaves, but not for many years now. I think I lost my taste for tea when I yielded to the current fashion and weakly drank China tea like everybody else. Was I afraid of tannin poisoning, or what? I do not know, but I am sure that to enjoy China tea requires a much more delicate palate than I possess. I feel towards it as Mulvaney felt towards the mild brand of tobacco that Kipling used to offer him. All my happiest memories of tea are of strong, dark—but not murderously dark—Indian tea. To come into a house at the seaside as a boy on a day of blazing sunshine, after bathing in the sun, walking in the sun, lying in the sun, and to sit down at a table loaded with hot and buttered baked delights, and to drink an enormous cup—or two enormous cups—of just not boiling Indian tea, was to experience a joy of the eye, the palate and the whole physical being such as no one brought up on China tea can have ever known. How the forehead streamed with appreciative sweat as one ate and drank! Tea such as that, like the fierce sun outside, the sea winds and the blue Atlantic waters, seemed to me to be part of a good world—indeed, as I thought at the time, of a perfect world.

Summer—there is no doubt about it—is the season for enjoying tea. In winter tea-drinking is little more than a convention. Tea at any time performs a useful function, perhaps, in compelling us to relax the tension of our lives for a minute or two. But, to be at its best, it must be drunk in hot weather, and it must itself be hot. The Anglo-Indians, it is said, have found from experience that, when the thermometer is high, hot tea is the best preventive of apoplexy. This is another reason for believing that the virtues of tea are most eminent when the sun is fiercest. I do not know about dwellers in the Antipodes, for they seem to have preserved an eighteenth-century passion for tea and to drink it with equal lust at all times and in all places and in all weathers. If Dr. Johnson were living to-day, I fancy he would extend his travels far beyond Scotland and sail for Australia and New Zealand in search of indomitable tea-drinkers worthy of the herb. Drinking tea in Scotland, he forgot all his prejudices against the Scots, and declared in a noble mood of reparation: "If an epicure could remove by a wish, in quest of seasonal gratifications, wherever he supped, he would breakfast in Scotland." It is true that he added: "In the islands, however, they do what I found it not easy to endure. They pollute the tea-table with large slices of Cheshire cheese, which mingles its less grateful odours with the fragrance of the tea." Perhaps, for perfection in such matters, one would have to travel across the world as far as New Zealand; and perhaps it would be worth it. Dr. Johnson, no doubt, would have thought so.

When I reflect on the recent discovery that the perfect cup of tea can be made only from old used tea-leaves, however, I cannot help pitying Dr. Johnson and Cowper and all those famous tea-drinkers of the eighteenth century who imagined that they were living in a tea-drinker's paradise. I do not know what they did with old damp tea-leaves in those days; but probably they were used, as they were used in my own childhood, by housemaids to throw on the carpet in order to lay the dust before sweeping. In this way generations of men and women have been cheated out of the luxury of tasting tea in its supreme excellence. We are like wine-drinkers who have all their lives been drinking public-house port and thinking it good. We may almost be said to know nothing about tea. And the chief reason is, it seems to me, that we have inherited the passion for waste. If economy were in our blood, we should long ago have discovered that old tea-leaves were better than new. But we scorned to make the miserly experiments that would have led to such a discovery. The pleasure of being spendthrifts was so great that we missed the finer pleasure of drinking tea of a fragrance of which Dr. Johnson never dreamed.

Yet, if we had given the matter serious thought, we should have realised long since that, in the preparation of food and drink, economy is often the parent of luxury. It is the economical nations, for example, that make the best cooks. The French are generally praised as the best cooks in Europe, and they have also the reputation of being the most economical. Nothing, it is said, is wasted in a French kitchen, and the French cook seems even to enjoy his task of converting unpromising materials into a palatable dish. English cookery, on the other hand, until recently was, to say the least of it, uneven. The cook was provided with the best materials in the world, but she treated them as though the chief object of cookery were, not to cook well, but to waste as much of the foodstuffs as possible. Authorities on diet told her that by her method of cooking green vegetables, she was wasting their most nourishing qualities, which she usually poured down the sink. Contemptuous of economy, however, as an un-English kind of meanness, she continued vigorously to destroy both the flavour and the nutritional value of the vegetables. By refusing to boil a potato economically in its jacket, she contrived at the same time to give it the unpleasant texture of soap and greatly to diminish its virtue as food. And how many other dishes she wasted by spoiling fish and fowl and beef-steaks and legs of mutton! I am not, of course, suggesting that in the old days bad cookery was universal or even the rule; but it was common enough to make one feel that one could not depend on getting a well-cooked meal at an ordinary wayside hotel as one could depend on getting this at most hotels in France. And the cause of this, I think, was that the cook felt no need to be economical. Surrounded by an abundance of good food, she took the line that it could be more or less left to cook itself. Probably, if good food had been scarcer, she would have valued it more. She might even in time have come to appreciate not only the uses but the pleasures of economy.

It may seem a little hypocritical of me to write like this, for I myself belong temperamentally to the company not of the economists but of the wasters. My eyes have been opened lately, however, and I have begun to enjoy practising at least one economy—economy in the use of safety razor-blades. A correspondent sent me last week a glass affair called Lillicrap's Hone by the daily use of which a clergyman declares he has already had 1,500 good shaves from a single blade. I began using it sceptically, but with the pleasure of playing with a new toy; and to my surprise I have already had eight shaves from one blade—an unparalleled number for me. I now feel independent of the shortage of razor-blades and I even enjoy moving the blade backwards and forwards on the glass every morning. If all economy is as pleasant as this, I plump for economy. Tea-leaves, food and razor-blades—it seems to me that we can live in luxury if only we are economical enough. Having begun with razor-blades, I hope to proceed to used tea-leaves. Then at last I may be able once more to enjoy the luxury of a "nice cup of tea." Y. Y.

ELLEN TERRY

WHEN she came on to the stage as Lady Cicely in *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*, the stage collapsed like a house of cards and all the limelights were extinguished. When she spoke it was as if someone drew a bow over a ripe, richly seasoned 'cello; it grated, it glowed and it growled. Then she stopped speaking. She put on her glasses. She gazed intently at the back of a settee. She had forgotten her part. But did it matter? Speaking or silent, she was Lady Cicely —or was it Ellen Terry? At any rate, she filled the stage and all the other actors were put out, as electric lights are put out in the sun.

Yet this pause when she forgot what Lady Cicely said next was significant. It was a sign not that she was losing her memory and past her prime, as some said. It was a sign that Lady Cicely was not a part that suited her. Her son, Gordon Craig, insists that she only forgot her part when there was something uncongenial in the words, when some speck of grit had got into the marvellous machine of her genius. When the part was congenial, when she was Shakespeare's Portia, Desdemona, Ophelia, every word, every comma was consumed. Even her eyelashes acted. Her body lost its weight. Her son, a mere boy, could lift her in his arms. "I am not myself," she said. "Something comes upon me. . . . I am always-in-the-air, light and bodiless." We, who can only remember her as Lady Cicely on the little stage at the Court Theatre, only remember what, compared with her Ophelia or her Portia, was as a picture postcard compared with the great Velasquez in the gallery.

It is the fate of actors to leave only picture postcards behind them. Every night when the curtain goes down the beautiful coloured canvas is rubbed out. What remains is at best only a wavering, insubstantial phantom—a verbal life on the lips of the living. Ellen Terry was well aware of it. She tried herself, overcome by the greatness of Irving as Hamlet and indignant at the caricatures of his detractors, to describe what she remembered. It was in vain. She dropped her pen in despair. "Oh God, that I were a writer!" she cried. "Surely a *writer* could not string words together about Henry Irving's Hamlet and say *nothing, nothing*." It never struck her, humble as she was, and obsessed by her lack of book learning, that she was, among other things, a writer. It never occurred to her when she wrote her autobiography, or scribbled page after page to Bernard Shaw late at night, dead tired after a rehearsal, that she was "writing." The words in her beautiful rapid hand bubbled off her pen. With dashes and notes of exclamation she tried to give them the very tone and stress of the spoken word. It is true, she could not build a house with words, one room opening out of another, and a staircase connecting the whole. But whatever she took up became in her warm, sensitive grasp a tool. If it was a rolling-pin, she made perfect pastry. If it was a carving knife, perfect slices fell from the leg of mutton. If it were a pen, words peeled off, some broken, some suspended in mid-air, but all far more expressive than the tappings of the professional typewriter.

With her pen then at odds and ends of time she has painted a self-portrait. It is not an Academy portrait, glazed, framed, complete. It is rather a bundle of loose leaves upon each of which she has dashed off a sketch for a portrait—here a nose, here an arm, here a foot, and there a mere scribble in the margin. The sketches done in different moods, from different angles, sometimes contradict each other. The nose cannot belong to the eyes; the arm is out of all proportion to the foot. It is difficult to assemble them. And there are blank pages, too. Some very important features are left out. There was a self she did not know, a gap she could not fill. Did she not take Walt Whitman's words for a motto? "Why, even I myself, I often think, know little or nothing of my real life. Only a few hints—a few diffused faint clues and indirections. . . . I seek . . . to trace out here?"

Nevertheless, the first sketch is definite enough. It is the sketch of her childhood. She was born to the stage. The stage was her cradle, her nursery. When other little girls were being taught sums and pot hooks she was being cuffed and buffeted into the practice of her profession. Her ears were boxed, her muscles suppled. All day she was hard at work on the boards. Late at night when other children were safe in bed she was stumbling along the dark streets wrapped in her father's cloak. And the dark street with its curtained windows was nothing but a sham to that little professional actress, and the rough and tumble life on the boards was her home, her reality. "It's all such sham there," she wrote—meaning by "there" what she called "life lived in houses"—"sham—cold—hard—pretending. It's not sham here in our theatre—here all is real, warm and kind—we live a lovely spiritual life here."

That is the first sketch. But turn to the next page. The child born to the stage has become a wife. She is married at sixteen to an elderly famous painter. The theatre has gone; its lights are out and in its place is a quiet studio in a garden. In its place is a world full of pictures and "gentle artistic people with quiet voices and elegant manners." She sits mum in her corner while the famous elderly people talk over her head in quiet voices. She is content to wash her husband's brushes; to sit to him; to play her simple tunes on the piano to him while he paints. In the evening she wanders over the Downs with the great poet, Tennyson. "I was in Heaven," she wrote. "I never had one single pang of regret for the theatre." If only it could have lasted! But somehow—here a blank page intervenes—she was an incongruous element in that quiet studio. She was too young, too vigorous, too vital, perhaps. At any rate, the marriage was a failure.

And so, skipping a page or two, we come to the next sketch. She is a mother now. Two adorable children claim all her devotion. She is living in the depths of the country, in the heart of domesticity. She is up at six. She scrubs, she cooks, she sews. She teaches the children. She harnesses the pony. She fetches the milk. And again she is perfectly happy. To live with children in a cottage, driving her little cart about the lanes, going to church on Sunday in blue and white cotton—that is the ideal life! She asks no more than that it shall go on like that for ever and ever. But one day the wheel comes off the pony cart. Huntsmen in pink leap over the hedge. One of them dismounts and offers help. He looks at the girl in a blue frock and exclaims: "Good God! It's Nelly!" She looks at the huntsman in pink and cries, "Charles Reade!" And so, all in a jiffy, back she goes to the stage, and to forty pounds a week. For—that is the reason she gives—the bailiffs are in the house. She must make money.

At this point a very blank page confronts us. There is a gulf which we can only cross at a venture. Two sketches face each other; Ellen Terry in blue cotton among the hens; Ellen Terry robed and crowned as Lady Macbeth on the stage of the Lyceum. The two sketches are contradictory yet they are both of the same woman. She hates the stage; yet she adores it. She worships her children; yet she forsakes them. She would like to live for ever among pigs and ducks in the open air; yet she spends the rest of her life among actors and actresses in the limelight. Her own attempt to explain the discrepancy is hardly convincing. "I have always been more woman than artist," she says. Irving put the theatre first. "He had none of what I may call my bourgeois qualities—the love of being in love, the love of a home, the dislike of solitude." She tries to persuade us that she was an ordinary woman enough; a better hand at pastry than most; an adept at keeping house; with an eye for colour, a taste for old furniture, and a positive passion for washing children's heads. If she went back to the stage it was because—well, what else could she do when the bailiffs were in the house?

This is the little sketch that she offers us to fill in the gap between the two Ellen Terrys—Ellen the mother, and Ellen the actress. But here we remember her warning: "Why, even I myself know little or nothing of my real life." There was something in her that she did not understand; something that came surging up from the depths and swept her away in its clutches. The voice she heard in the lane was not the voice of Charles Reade; nor was it the voice of the bailiffs. It was the voice of her genius; the urgent call of something that she could not define, could not suppress, and must obey. So she left her children and followed the voice back to the stage, back to the Lyceum, back to a long life of incessant toil, anguish and glory.

But, having gazed at the full-length portrait of Ellen Terry as Sargent painted her, robed and crowned as Lady Macbeth, turn to the next page. It is done from another angle. Pen in hand, she is seated at her desk. A volume of Shakespeare lies before her. It is open at *Cymbeline*, and she is making careful notes in the margin. The part of Imogen presents great problems. She is, she says, "on the rack" about her interpretation. Perhaps Bernard Shaw can throw light upon the question? A long letter from the brilliant young critic of the *Saturday Review* lies beside Shakespeare. She has never met him, but for years they have written to each other, intimately, ardently, disputatiously, some of the best letters in the language. He says the most outrageous things. He compares dear Henry to an ogre, and Ellen to a captive chained in his cage. But Ellen Terry is quite capable of holding her own against Bernard Shaw. She scolds him, laughs at him, fondles him, and contradicts him. She has a curious sympathy for the advanced views that Henry Irving abominated. But what suggestions has the brilliant critic to make about Imogen? None apparently that she has not already thought for herself. She is as close and critical a student of Shakespeare as he is. She has studied every line, weighed the meaning of every word; experimented with every gesture. Each of those golden moments when she becomes bodyless, not herself, is the result of months of minute and careful study. "Art," she quotes, "needs that which we can give her, I assure you." In fact this mutable woman, all instinct, sympathy and sensation, is as painstaking a student, and as careful of the dignity of her art as Flaubert himself.

But once more the expression on that serious face changes. She works like a slave—none harder. But she is quick to tell Mr. Shaw that she does not work with her brain only. She is not in the least clever. Indeed, she is happy she tells him, "*not to be clever*." She stresses the point with a jab of her pen. "You clever people," as she calls him and his friends, miss so much, mar so much. As for education, she never had a day's schooling in her life. As far as she can see, but the problem baffles her, the main spring of her art is imagination. Visit mad houses, if you like; take notes; observe; study endlessly. But first, imagine. And so she takes her part away from the books out into the woods. Rambling down grassy rides, she lives her part until she is it. If a word jars or grates, she must re-think it, re-write it. Then when every phrase is her own, and every gesture spontaneous out she comes onto the stage and is Imogen, Ophelia, Desdemona.

But is she, even when the great moments are on her, a great actress? She doubts it. "I cared more for love and life," she says. Her face, too, has been no help to her. She cannot sustain emotion. Certainly she is not a great tragic actress. Now and again, perhaps, she has acted some comic part to perfection. But even while she analyses herself, as one artist to another, the sun slants upon an old kitchen chair. "Thank the Lord for my eyes!" she exclaims. What a world of joy her eyes have brought her! Gazing at the old "rush-bottomed, sturdy-legged, and wavy-backed" chair, the stage is gone, the limelights are out, the famous actress is forgotten.

Which, then, of all these women is the real Ellen Terry? How are we to put the scattered sketches together? Is she mother, wife, cook, critic, actress, or should she have been, after all, a painter? Each part seems the right part until she throws it aside and plays another. Something of Ellen Terry it seems overflowed every part and remained unacted. Shakespeare could not fit her; nor Ibsen; nor Shaw. The stage could not hold her; nor the nursery. But there is, after all, a greater dramatist than Shakespeare, Ibsen or Shaw. There is nature. Her's is so vast a stage, and so innumerable a company of actors, that for the most part she fobs them off with a tag or two. They come on and they go off without breaking the ranks. But now and again nature creates a new part, an original part. The actors who act that part always defy our attempts to name them. They will not act the stock parts—they forget the words, they improvise others of their own. But when they come on the stage falls like a pack of cards and the limelights are extinguished. That was Ellen Terry's fate—to act a new part. And thus while other actors are remembered because they were Hamlet, Phédre or Cleopatra, Ellen Terry is remembered because she was Ellen Terry.

VIRGINIA WOOLF

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET

THE generally carping reception of Frederick Ashton's choreographic fantasy, *The Wanderer*, provokes a few reflections before the Sadler's Wells Ballet season comes to an end. It is really rather a hopeful sign, for new beauty, said Jean Cocteau, should not appear to be beautiful on first acquaintance, and one remembers what uncontrollable fury the insulting ugliness of the first Post-Impressionist exhibitions aroused in the academic critics and painters of the time, and how Stravinsky's music assailed the ears of musical critics as odiously as the tropical durian fruit does the unaccustomed nostrils of Europeans. The passage of time and persuasive heretical tongues have long since made these strange dishes palatable to academicians of both arts. How is it possible to grasp at first sight all the composite elements, musical, decorative, motor, which are interwoven in such a ballet as *The Wanderer*; to follow the moving pattern of the whole let alone trace the choreographic significance of single motives?

It is probably a pity that *The Wanderer* was not provided from the first with a "programme"; for the word "inhibition," idly spoken, dropped a smoke screen of speculation about Freud and Oedipus between the spectator and the action on the stage. Yet there is plenty in the line and grouping alone to occupy the perceptual powers of most spectators. Follow, for instance, the significant opening hand movements of Robert Helpmann, which occur with modifications throughout the ballet, and which are a dance-theme as definite as any musical one. Follow, again, the correspondence between the musical and dance movement. The relation is so close (not mere identity of rhythm) that the dance has really become part of the texture of the music. The decor, too, throws light on the moods of the ballet; the scene is not arbitrarily changed in the middle part, but corresponds very closely to its mood. We are in a different region of being from the brilliant atmosphere of the first and last parts, and the strange groups who revolve through it are natural denizens of the sinister world of the backcloth. The execution of the *corps de ballet* is at present too far below that of the soloists; they should at least achieve in their ensemble a definition of line corresponding to purity of tone in an orchestra. Something strange has happened to *The Prospect Before Us* during its provincial tour. All the dancers seem to sacrifice the integrity of their parts to the mad pursuit of a laugh at any price—all except poor Ashton, who dances the part of Noverre with settled gloom. It must be admitted that Helpmann is the ringleader in this orgy of funniness. But his incredibly funny part allows him a wide margin. He is funny with a far more refined art in *A Wedding Bouquet*, the last revival of the season, which has never been so well performed by all concerned. Certainly Constant Lambert's admirable declamation of the words which, hurled at us by vocalists on the stage, used to be mere syllables of sound and fury, adds considerably to our enjoyment of each situation in this marvellous Chaplinesque melodrama; it seemed also to stimulate the dancers to still greater brilliance. Every detail is perfect; so also was the tact of Frederick Ashton and Lord Berners in allowing Gertrude Stein to regard *A Wedding Bouquet* as her own creation, whereas her real share in their dazzling structure of dance and music were a few evocative phrases. That she did so regard it is proved by the last sentence of her delighted and amusing description: "There is no use in going to see a thing if you have not written it no use at all." This was her first meeting with Frederick Ashton, whom she decided on the spot to be a genius "more likely than any we have seen for a long time." And she knew.

BERYL DE ZOETE

OCTOBER, 1940

I'M sick to death
Of hearing where that one fell,
And I won't cross the road
For the veriest peach among craters,
So don't you come telling me that your cousin is houseless,
Or there's not enough gas in the flat even to cook your potaters.

Death changes partners each night
In his noisy and fatuous dance;
They to-day, we to-morrow. Or next week.
Or possibly never,
Since we have on our side
The inscrutable laws of chance;
And we can't be sure we'll be hit,
Since the bombing can't go on for ever.

INNES HART

THE MOVIES

"Quiet Wedding," at the Plaza

Quiet Wedding is an English *Clochemerle.* Not that its inspiration is anything so ribald and lyrical as the appearance of a shiny convenience among neighbours making do with older ways; but the village pump can take many forms. There is a flurry, a clustering round of gossip, a summoning of the clans—to whatever the event may be. In the film, a traditional "quiet wedding" sounds the siren. It begins at a local cricket match, with the last-man-in keeping the field waiting; he is found, with his pads on, but making love behind a tree. At the moment of interruption he has just managed to stammer out a proposal. An unexpected Yes gives him more than the usual crusader's look as he strides in to bat: and his future father-in-law is bowling! "Your daughter and I—" he begins breathlessly, but he is waved on to the other crease; he has to take guard and face the tense arthritic run of the bowler. After spanking two full-tosses for sixes, he is warned by a whisper from the slips (future brother-in-law, who has heard the news) that it's time he got out, so the next ball sees a spread-eagled wicket and father-in-law congratulating himself on his top spinner while the possibility of his daughter's engagement trickles into now listening ears.

If you like this beginning sequence, which opens out delightfully like a cartoon that comes to life as you read its anecdote, you will enjoy *Quiet Wedding*. For the whole piece is only an anecdote to which caricature and a touch of rebel sentiment have given point. The engagement brings promise of a "quiet wedding," local society is stirred to its furthest fringes, presents overflow a sitting-room, the vicar starts calling and choir-practices turn towards Mendelssohn, relatives begin to bob up and down all over the country, and at the centre of unrest—an agreeably modest country-house—the loving couple get such a whiff of orange-blossom and everlastings that they slap one another's faces and come near to calling the whole thing off. As a picture of the horrors of engagement in the shires, with the squirearchy viewhallooing in all but name, *Quiet Wedding* is delightedly and authentically English. How English and class-English are accents and manners! Yet one isn't made to feel, with each new joke at their expense, that some part of an expensive tea-service is being broken. The malice is softened by nostalgia for a pre-war world in which such mild atrocities could afflict the sensitive, in which the wheezy clanking of habit could always be relied on to go one better than *Punch*. *Quiet Wedding* has what nearly all English films lack, a style as well as a material of its own. It is my impression that this film, made by Anthony Asquith, is its director's best. (I missed *French Without Tears*.) With the slenderest of plots goes a gay invention and a delight in waking a social unit out of its slumber; the little country of *Quiet Wedding*, with its big house and cricket matches and the local porter and the local bench, is really as self-contained as the township fêted in *Clochemerle*. Here, it is true, trunk-calls and visitors from London vary the routine, but only to confirm or break in on snugness. The bridegroom's father, a massive business man who has silky words for a rival whom he has outrageously beaten down in a deal, turns up on the eve of the wedding to find no car at the station and, at the end of a mile's walk with luggage, a flurry of last-minute moving for the reception. He is first mistaken for a local reporter and then lapses into anonymity sitting on an ornamental chair in the hall. And at the wedding itself, when he pushes forward through the crowd outside the little church, an infant raises its voice and cries, "Who is that man?" This minor part—whose appearances add up to perhaps fifteen minutes—is played with a delightful zest by Frank Cellier. One might say that all the parts are minor ones and equally well played: Marjorie Fleming as a mother with bird-like intentness winging on towards the event, Athene Seyler as an aunt with sentimental understanding, Peggy Ashcroft in the guise of a simple-intellectual young lady whose every utterance is a daisy of speech, Bernard Miles's constable and Hay Petrie's railway porter; in each of these caricature has given an edge to comedy. The sort of joking, blithely ironic, in which *Quiet Wedding* abounds is not, of course, new even in films, but in Asquith's hands these jokes are more than stage props, more than a studio convention. They develop farcically or sentimentally at a touch. The lovers (Derek Farr and Margaret Lockwood) are pigeon-holed more for sentiment, and for one tableau in which they lean heads over a doggie or make the discovery of unsuspected Christian names, there are ten adorning the moral that love has a hard passage through the cogs of tradition. *Quiet Wedding* is the gayest piece I have seen in a cinema for months.

William Whitebait

THE COMING WEEK

Saturday, February 8th—
Herbert Read: "Anarchism and the Artist," Dick Sheppard Centre, 2.30.
Royal Philharmonic Society Concert, Queen's Hall, 2.30.
A Service for Refugees from Nazi Oppression, and their English friends, Holy Trinity Church, Kingsway, W.C.2, 3.
Sunday, February 9th—
C. E. M. Joad: "Some Nazi Philosophy," Conway Hall, 11.
K. B. Smellie: "Social Philosophy: Greek," I.S.T.D., 17 Manchester Street, W.1, 11.
Nat. Fed. of Business and Professional Women's Clubs Lunch, Miss Barbara Ward: "Who Will Rule in the Mediterranean?" Royal Hotel, Woburn Place, 12.30.
Monday, February 10th—
Fabian International Affairs Group Snack Lunch, Rita Hinden: "New White Man's Burden." 12 Gt. Newport Street, 1.
Tuesday, February 11th—
E. H. Ellis: "The Problem of Materials—A Plea for Research," Housing Centre, 1.
G. I. Finch: "Explosives," Royal Inst., 2.30.
Wednesday, February 12th—
M. Réne Avord: La Littérature Politique au XVIIIe siècle, Institut Français, 3.
Friday, February 14th—
C. E. M. Joad: "Some Problems of Philosophy," Birkbeck College, 1.15.

Correspondence

DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL UNITY

Sir,—Your article raises issues of vital importance to the future of the Labour Party. It appears from Mr. Churchill's remark and Mr. Attlee's reply to a question at Oxford (reported in the *Sunday Times*) that the principle of a Coalition Government during the "period of reconstruction after the war" has been accepted as desirable by the leaders of the Labour and Conservative parties. Mr. Attlee is reported to have said: "I cannot prophesy what will happen after the war, *but we are working out a basis on which we can agree*. Whether we shall I am not prepared to say." It is evident that the mandate to enter a National Government for conducting the war is to be extended, if possible, to cover the period of reconstruction. And this, we are told, will take years. It looks as though democracy can go to sleep for a long time.

As I understand your article, you are not opposed to national unity, but you would have such unity based on the policies of the Left. You want to "lay the foundations of the new order during the war." You desire to create revolutionary forces on the Continent and that the Army should co-operate with these forces. But are you not in these demands asking for disunity rather than unity both during and after the war? For months now I have heard the pleas of the intellectual Lefts for revolutionary policies at home and on the Continent. How they can expect a response from the Right to these cries for radical changes at home and revolution in Europe passes my comprehension. In the first place, will you tell us what grounds there are for saying you can create revolutionary movements on the Continent; and, secondly, will you tell us why we should expect the present Government to take advantage of any such movements? Will the governing classes in Britain or on the Continent help you? Will the Churches aid you? It is clear to anyone who follows events in Europe that these forces are on the side of authoritarianism—not necessarily of the Hitler type—but better this, even, than a social revolution. Will the Continental workers rush to the banner of revolution? I find it extremely difficult to believe it. Indeed, I do not believe it, unless you can give us some reasonably solid evidence. The Continental worker would probably tell you to effect your own revolution first. And what chance, even if it is desirable, is there of a social revolution during the war in Britain? None.

The tragic fact is that the "intellectual Left" imagines that Britain is fighting this war for their aims and purposes—social revolution at home and abroad! What wishful thinking! What tragic childishness! A well-known politician at the outbreak of the war said to me: "This is grand. The Right has been compelled to fight the battle of the Left." But up till now the Left is like:

> An infant crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light,
> With no language but a cry.

Aberavon. W. G. Cove

[Reference is made to this letter in our Comments this week.—Ed., *N.S.&N.*]

FUTURE OF THE LABOUR PARTY

Sir,—Possibly without knowing it, Garry Allighan has revealed, in your current issue, the outstanding anomaly of the Labour Movement—the fact that trade unionists, who contribute most in numbers and cash to the Labour Party, control it the least. In some places there is a "Labour Party and Trades Council"; in others a Labour Party and a Trades Council; in yet others a Labour Party and an uncorrelated conglomeration of Trade Unions. In some Labour Parties "Set C" rules, and in others "Set G," operate with their different effects on the local Trade Unions. Mr. Allighan's chief point seems to me to be that the time has arrived when the Trade Unions, because of their numerical and financial superiority over the non-T.U. affiliations, should control the Labour Party and use it as their political apparatus. That is part of the slowly-dawning realisation that the basis of politics is economics. Working-class economics are the concern, almost entirely, of the Trade Unions, who need political apparatus to secure statutory basis for their economic agreements. If the direction of the Labour Party takes a purely Trade Union character, there will be no repetition of the fact that large numbers of trade unionists have not voted Labour in the past. That was because the Labour Party was more concerned about China and internationalism than about the bread-and-butter politics in which, almost to the exclusion of all else—certainly as of primary importance—such trade unionists are interested in. That being so—as any worker in the constituencies could tell the Labour Party chiefs—your contributor has not so much indicated the future possibilities of the Labour Party (as if there were alternatives) as indicated the only possible route available to it if that Party is to claim a distinctive identity. George Shaw

Bradford.

Sir,—The article by Garry Allighan on "The Future of the Labour Party" reminds one of a problem which ought to have been settled years ago, and which must be settled now. Garry Allighan says that the Labour Party is likely to return to its function as a Labour Representation Committee. This may or may not be a good thing, but it does mean that middle-class workers and small rentiers who are Socialists by conviction, but who are not eligible to become Trade Unionists, will become even further estranged from the Labour Party than they tend to be at present, and this, I submit, is a very bad thing.

There is a very large and growing body of Socialist opinion among professional and business people, especially in the younger generation. I know for a fact that a substantial number of wartime Army officers (mostly professional people in peace) will admit, more or less openly, that they are Socialists. Such a statement would have been ridiculous twenty-five years ago.

Yet although it is open to these people to become individual members of the Labour Party, very few have actually done so. The reasons for this may not always be very creditable; they may in some cases include considerations of social position, or even mere indolence. But I think there is more in it than that. I think that the non-union Party member, however loyal and enthusiastic he may be, cannot help feeling that he is something of a camp-follower in a movement predominantly run *by* Trade Unionists *for* Trade Unionists. Yet nobody will attempt to deny that the influence, and the brains, of the middle-class worker are very necessary in attaining the Socialist Commonwealth, and will be essential once it is attained.

The conclusion would seem to be that we do not tend to get the best of middle-class Socialist opinion in the Party. To put it plainly, the non-union members of the Party tend to be cranks and are by no means representative of their type. And I suggest that this state of affairs can best be remedied by giving non-union members influence in proportion to their numbers, and inducing in them the double loyalty, through the Union and through the Local Party, which Trade Unionists already enjoy.

There ought to be a sort of Middle-Class Union to which professional and business workers could belong, in addition to being members of Local Parties. This Union (or Society) should take its own part in the Movement, sending delegates to the Annual Conference on exactly the same basis as the Unions, and it should be obligatory for all individual members who are debarred from being Trade Unionists to belong to it. By its size this Society should be prevented from becoming a hot-air club, and its existence would give encouragement to people who only need a very little encouragement to become active and useful members of the Party, and a sense of solidarity to individual members which (I think) they are at present lacking.

Subaltern

Sir,—Your contributor Mr. Allighan omits in his analysis any reference to the real source of life in the Labour Party and its only hope of an effective future. The contributors of numerical and financial strength may be of interest technically speaking, but it is misleading to omit mentioning other vital factors. It is well known to responsible T.U. officials that the majority of members limit their socialism to the paying of union dues. Even active trades unionists are not necessarily effective socialists. There are good grounds for suspecting the whole structure of Trades Union Socialism of being no more than ameliorative in its policy and totally unfitted to control the party machine at this vital stage of its history.

The life of the Labour Party in a crisis consists in the will and consciousness of its members, and the duty of active socialists at the present moment is solely and simply "political education." If, for obvious reasons, we get no lead from above, this does not mean that the real party (as distinct from its nominal leaders) is precluded from formulating resolutions on peace and reconstruction at home and abroad. There is need now as never before that the common man and woman in or out of the party should be enlightened and made at least to begin to think progressively, constructively and with knowledge of his or her ultimate responsibility for the peace. The conscious minority should be administering vigorous treatment to groups wherever they may be found or inaugurated; N.C.L.C., W.E.A., Leagues of Youth and Women's Guilds are still functioning. The only hope of the Labour Party lies in being able to put forward a coherent and determined actual policy of reconstruction as quickly as possible. This will not appear magically and be put into execution by some Messianic leader; if it does it will be neither socialism nor democracy.

If democracy is to meet its real test, that of being able to put its house in order, it should be waking from its long sleep now, exercising its brain and muscles in discussion groups wherever or however assembled. We who believe in democracy should be preparing it for its supreme opportunity. If this work is done now, energetically and efficiently, it will be found when the time comes there are those with guts and conviction enough to stage an electoral fight on the vital issues, who will not wonder timidly what "will not seem to the electors unreal."

West Hartlepool. Sybil Prinsky

UNOFFICIAL AMBASSADORS

Sir,—From time to time hints have appeared in your pages expressing almost an attitude of doubt on the advisability of permitting self-appointed ambassadors to carry on their war effort from the other side of the Atlantic. Lest there should be any of your readers who harboured any vestige of doubt that Sir Walter Citrine is loyally serving his Government, may I draw your attention to the *Daily Telegraph*, January 29th, in which appears the following:

> The tour has been a great success and has proved very popular with American Federation leaders. In particular it has had a reassuring effect on those who feared Britain was turning, or would turn, into a Socialistic State, which would prove as difficult for a democratic country like the United States to get on with after the war as Russia or Germany.

I feel this is an excellent reply to those critics who complain that Sir Walter is not pulling his weight with the other Labour leaders.

Hugh Faulkner

WAR ECONOMICS

Sir,—I happened to come across in this country a day or two ago your paper of the date November 23rd, 1940. Since it contains what amounts to a personal attack on me, I wish to answer it, even at a very late date.

In an article which I had shortly before written in the *Times*, I pointed out that while the well-to-do should accept willingly any sacrifice which helped to win the war, there was nothing to be gained for the community by their dismissing employees too old for other work or gardeners growing vegetables. Critic castigates me in a long paragraph:

> If a chauffeur, however old and decrepit, can drive Mr. Brand about, he can drive evacuees. If servants, however infirm, can wait upon Mr. Brand, they can perform similar services for unfortunate shelterers in the Tubes. If a gardener, however rheumatic, can raise vegetables for Mr. Brand, he can raise them for a public institution. If Mr. Brand has spare accommodation for his friends and relatives, it can be filled by soldiers, refugees and other less fortunate people. . . . If Mr. Brand does not understand this he has not grasped the full implications of war economics, and it must be regretfully added he is not qualified to instruct the rest of us.

I must do my best to remove Critic's sorrow at my delinquencies and my ignorance of my duties.

Many months ago I suggested to my chauffeur, who is 55 years old, that he should go into an armament works, which he did most willingly, and since then I have had no chauffeur. Since the beginning of the war, I have had between 30 and 40 human beings in my house—small children from very poor quarters in London and helpers to look after them. My three gardeners had orders at the beginning of the war to spend no further time on anything but producing vegetables, practically all of which are eaten by the children and others in my house. My groom, also aged between 50 and 60, has long ago gone into a munitions works. I have no domestic servants beyond what are required to look after this large number of people and to serve my very simple wants when I go to my country house at a week-end.

I am much more ready to believe that most other people in more or less the same position are acting in the same way than Critic. It is quite impossible, in any case, that the "rich" should not have decreased their consumption owing to the greatly increased taxation, and it is this which robs of any point Mr. Balogh's statement in the *Times* of November 23rd, that I am mistaken if I think that the normal consumption of the rich in peacetime is negligible in all directions. My whole contention was that that consumption must now be very greatly reduced, as it should and must be.

It is, of course, quite absurd for Critic to argue that all the infirm domestic servants in England could be employed on ministering to shelterers in the Tubes. While I agree with him that there is no case for my being made comfortable in order that I can write letters to the *Times*, there is a great case for those many thousands who are doing vital and important work in England not being harassed at every turn by having to make their own beds and cook their own food. R. H. Brand

Chile.

["Critic" writes: Mr. Brand has confirmed the point of my original remarks, namely, that if service is available to the rich it is available for other purposes. The fact that Mr. Brand has diverted such services to communal ends is much to his credit. I merely suggested that persons in his position should be given no option in the matter. That some of them may abuse this option Mr. Brand will realise when his copy of the *Times* of February 1st reaches him. The *Times* printed a letter of protest against an advertisement which appeared in its own columns. "Second footman or second parlourmaid required at once: four in family; thirteen servants, including in pantry." I quarrelled with Mr. Brand on a point of economic reasoning and not on a matter of personalities.—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

ADULT EDUCATION

Sir,—Mr. Joad's article on Education in London was presumably intended to show how the service to children and adult working-class *students* had been affected by war conditions. The W.E.A., London District, which has substantial representation on the University of London Tutorial Classes Committee, and primarily represents the interests of students, is concerned that Mr. Joad should seek to show that the Board of Education Regulations have been interpreted in a way which adversely affects those interests. Actually both the W.E.A. in its One-Year and Terminal Courses and the University Tutorial Classes Committee in University Tutorial and Sessional Courses are taking bigger financial risks in order that groups of students shall have their educational needs satisfied. It has happened, of course, that a Tutorial Class in its second or third year has not been able to find the necessary number of *original* students to justify the Committee in approving the Class on that basis, but the students who were left have had their numbers reinforced by new students and the Class has been approved as a Sessional Course. This has meant that the tutor, instead of receiving £80 for 24 meetings, would receive £60 for the same number of meetings. In both cases written work by students is required. The alternative, however, before the tutor in such cases is not between £80 and £60, but between £60 or nothing.

There are ways and means open to students and tutors if they feel the Regulations are not being interpreted in the proper spirit. Students may bring any questions before their W.E.A. Branches or the London District Council of the W.E.A., and the tutors are also directly represented on the London District W.E.A. Executive Committee.

But the point must be emphasised that the service is for students, and I know of no case, with a proper regard for public funds, where those interests have been neglected. W. Lowth,

28 Woburn Square, Secretary, W.E.A.,
London, W.C.1. London District

18B

Sir,—We act for Sir Oswald Mosley, Capt. Ramsay and others at present detained under the above Regulation and we beg leave to refer to the letter from the Secretary to The National Council for Civil Liberties published in your issue of January 11th. He says that "it is probable that a majority of those at present detained are persons who ought to be imprisoned."

We must point out that the Regulation was framed and passed by Parliament as a preventive measure and that there has never been any suggestion that those detained have been guilty of any criminal offence. If they had, they would have been prosecuted.

6–9 Surrey Street, Oswald Hickson,
London, W.C.2. Collier and Co.

FIRE SPOTTERS

Sir,—"Hooray!" I said, when Herbert Morrison brought out his fire-watching plans. Now at last we shall see some of this equality of sacrifice we have heard so much about. Managers, directors, everybody will have to take their turn.

Well, how is it working out in practice? Here's my experience. I am quite willing to watch my home and my neighbour's, but no, my employer's office comes first, and there I must spend my time.

And the owners, the shareholders; are they doing their bit to look after their own property? Many thousands of them, to my personal knowledge, are drawing their dividends in the safety of hotels in Wales, Devon or Cumberland, secure from the worries of rationing, bombing, etc., while we watch over their property and profits. That's equality of sacrifice.

Thus, to my regret, I cannot offer my services to the local Council, whose problems, in view of the amount of empty property in the borough, have my sympathy. For the responsibility of watching empty premises is the local Council's. When Hampstead residents are required to turn out in the numbers necessary to fill the rota for private houses as well as business premises, I hope they will be happy and honoured to know that they are contributing (gratis) to the peace of mind and material prosperity of the property-owners and dividend-drawers who have evacuated their precious selves to places of safety. "CLERICAL WORKER"

19 Lambolle Road,
N.W.3.

FAT CATTLE

SIR,—In your issue of January 25th, 1941, the Industrial Correspondent, under "Economic Notes," states in one paragraph, "But, for the moment, the food problem is the most serious of all . . . and that in a number of cases the possessors of potential supplies (e.g., *fat cattle*) are now holding these back in the hope of improved terms."

Obviously, your Correspondent is not in possession of the true facts, and his example of fat cattle is a gross injustice to the farming community.

The present Minister of Agriculture throughout last summer and autumn repeatedly warned farmers that supplies of feeding stuffs would be very limited (this he again reiterated in a speech at Dorset on Saturday, January 25th, 1941) and asked producers not to fatten cattle in the winter, but to run them on in store condition to be finished on the grass in the summer, 1941.

Further, prices were deliberately fixed by the Ministry of Food to endorse this policy, the highest price for fat cattle being 71*s*. per cwt. in June, 1941. Hence, numbers of cattle were marketed during the autumn months, which, under normal circumstances, would have been carried on and fattened out during the winter months. Fat cattle cannot be produced in five minutes, and the shortage of home supplies is due, not to their withholding, but to the farmer's loyalty in carrying out the Minister's request.

The National Farmers' Union,
Market Buildings, Guildford.
E. G. PASSMORE,
County Secretary

AMATEUR COMMUNIQUE

SIR,—The article headed "Amateur Communique" was merely amusing to anyone with inside knowledge of the circumstances and personalities involved, but readers without this background may be seriously misled.

It was dressed up as a criticism of the official communiques issued by the Air Ministry, and the burden of the complaint was that the officers responsible have "no newspaper experience." No doubt there is plenty of room for calm and reasonable discussion about the style and contents of communiques and the most suitable qualifications for their authors. There is a good deal to be said for the view that communiques cannot as a general rule pretend to be anything more than a brief, cold and accurate statement of the facts in which the picturesque language of the newspaper reporter would be out of place. After all, they represent the formal utterance of the Department which issues them.

An official announcement about the sinking of a battleship, for example, or the illness of a Cabinet Minister, is not usually supposed to reflect the atmosphere of Fleet Street, and it would seem rather odd to describe the despatch of a Commander-in-Chief after a great battle as "amateur." There may, of course, be reasons why different considerations should apply in the case of the Royal Air Force. If there are, it is unfortunate that the correspondent did not elaborate them.

In reality the article read like nothing more than a personal attack on the officers of A.I.6. It did not assail the Air Ministry, which ordered them as Volunteer Reserve Officers to their posts. In fact, it implied that a band of unscrupulous lawyers, "closely associated with each other in private life," had seized the Air Ministry communique system—a suggestion that does no credit to the author.

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION seems to have allowed itself to be misled into assisting at the disinterment of a very dead story—a nine days' wonder in last year's silly season. It kept the papers going for several weeks in August and September until they suddenly dropped it.

The article revived several of the more offensive and inaccurate statements. It is *not* the fact that there were any complaints of delay in the issuing of official communiques on the great battles of August and September. Not a single newspaper made such a complaint; on the contrary several of them made complimentary references to the speed with which they were issued. It is *not* the fact that the questions in Parliament or the general agitation had any connection whatever with official communiques. They were concerned with an entirely artificial controversy about the examination of "facility" articles and photographs for so-called "Service suitability," which was said to involve double censorship. Surprising as it may seem, this examination did not even come within the province of A.I.6, being dealt with by an entirely different Section. Finally, the correspondent refers to one member of the Section who saw distinguished service from 1914–18 (and incidentally was the first airman to launch a torpedo and later taught several of to-day's R.A.F. leaders to pilot an aircraft) as having done "a little flying." Further comment is needless.

To turn for a moment to the facts—the communiques have been written by a number of hands with the most diverse qualifications—a former Independent M.P.; two authors; a former lecturer in English Literature; a playwright; a barrister; a solicitor; an advertising consultant; and a former Secretary to a Dominions Prime Minister. Plenty of ability, intelligence, common sense and knowledge of English. No *newspaper* experience certainly. Is this necessary? The Air Ministry apparently does not think so, nor do any of the other Service Departments, but if this is the point at issue, could it not be discussed without entering into offensive personalities? ONLOOKER

[Our correspondent writes: My article was not intended as a personal attack. On the contrary, the question it raised was and still is important. In my view—a view shared by people I have talked with in pubs, shelters, hotels, service messes, A.R.P. depots and other communal centres in London and the provinces—British Aerial Communiques do not do justice to their possibilities. Accuracy, I agree with "Onlooker," is essential, but I do not think that Air Communiques need be "brief and cold"—or boring. This is a new war and new ways of fighting are being used; propaganda which is based on an understanding of the public mind is one of the most powerful weapons. I suggested that those in charge of A.I.6 who control the Air Communiques do not possess the type of experience and contact with the public which is necessary. I did not intend to suggest anything discreditable to the character or integrity of the personnel of A.I.6 such as "Onlooker" seems to have read into my remarks. But I want to apologise for unintentionally doing less than justice to the flying record of an officer who has seen distinguished service and who, I regret to hear, is no longer a member of A.I.6.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

FREEDOM

SIR,—I notice in your issue of February 1st that you describe a point made by Mr. Morrison in the House of Commons, and of course by many other people, alleging that it is hypocritical of Communists to appeal on the ground of freedom when they believe neither in tolerance nor freedom, as a fair point. I don't want to argue the case as to whether that is a correct description of the Communist attitude, but I do want to suggest to you that the point is not a fair point, but a very bad one.

The essence of the claim to be a land of democracy and freedom is surely that we should treat every citizen, "however uninfluential, however unpopular, however wrong-headed" in accordance with our own principles, which are that he should be allowed to express himself in speech and in writing. There are limits to that, which shrink every day, and which need not be discussed; but our conduct surely cannot be governed by our ideas, right or wrong, as to what *that* citizen would do if *he* were in power—which he is not. Otherwise, we should have to say: "Every citizen except those who we think—rightly or wrongly—would treat us differently."

The words I have given in inverted commas above are from that eminent lawyer, Lord Simon, who, just about the time his colleagues, with his assent, were suppressing the *Daily Worker*, stated publicly that no country could truly claim to enjoy liberty unless every citizen, however uninfluential, unpopular, or wrong-headed, could appeal to the law and to the Courts to protect him from injury or insult, even though the wrong was committed by the misuse of official power. D. N. PRITT

[Our point was merely that an argument based on liberty comes better from people who believe in it as a principle than from those who deride it except when their own liberty is threatened.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE TEMPLE

SIR,—In his note on the Temple Critic suggests that when it is rebuilt, as it will have to be, its tenancy should be less exclusive; in other words, that it should be thrown open to the general public instead of only to the members of the Societies who are its landlords and who pay very dearly for this privilege.

The suggestion that it is not already open shows some lack of knowledge. It is a grievance with many members of the two Societies that there are far too many laymen and sub-tenants there already, that indeed the whole atmosphere of the Inns has been lost for material ends. There are quite a number of people who are prepared to offer almost any rental for the privilege of living in the Temple, and it is difficult for a hard-working barrister, probably just on the fringe of making a living, to refuse a rent which would not only pay his rent but give him enough to live elsewhere. Some years ago rents in the Temple were on a very moderate scale, and quite properly so. Now they have sky-rocketed, which means that many people who were entitled to live in the Temple can no longer afford to do so and have given place to people who have no right "to usurp" the amenities and conveniences meant for the student and practitioner of the law.

The writer of the note seems to have forgotten how many Temple leaseholds were originally created. The Crown sold the freehold to the two Societies in 1624, and many sets of chambers were built by members, who, as recompense for the expense to which they were put, were given leases for so many lives. There was no usurpation of any "public" rights.

Another sentence in the "Diary" also reads rather queerly. You talk as if the original site of the Temple had been dedicated to "scholars whose educational heritage has been usurped." What this means, I do not know. The Temple was never meant for poor scholars. There was no examination attached to entry at the Bar until well into the middle of the last century, and so far from any educational heritage having been "usurped," the lectures now delivered under the auspices of the Inns of Court and under the Director of Legal Studies are of comparatively recent origin. The Temple is now to all intents and purposes a legal university with quite a number of "glittering prizes."

What one hopes is that when the Temple is reconstructed, its original purpose will be restored and its tenancy reserved at moderate rentals for members of the Bar and students of the Inns of Court, and that the Benchers of both Societies should not allow themselves, as they have in the past, to be seduced by the offer of high rentals, which has let in far too many outsiders who have no claim to "usurp"—to use your diarist's phrase—the heritage of these ancient Societies, whose members, in spite of your somewhat sneering remarks, have always been found in the forefront of the fight for democracy and freedom.

"MIDDLE TEMPLAR"

[Critic did not suggest that the Temple should be thrown open to the public, but that it would make a fine University.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

RECORD WINTERS

SIR,—Like your correspondent, Gwen Barnard, I was very much surprised by Miss V. Sackville-West's assertion that 1609 was the only hard winter between 1462 and 1708. In 1536 on December 22nd, the Thames was frozen so hard that the King, Henry VIII, went from London to Greenwich on the ice. In 1564–5 the weather until the end of the year was mild, but in the new year the cold was so intense that the Thames was frozen and people walked upon it like a street. In 1570–1 in the Border country round Berwick a storm began about the third week in November and the snow and frost lasted well into February. In February, Berwick Bridge was damaged and for a time there was no communication between England and Scotland as "the multitude of ice" made crossing by boat impossible. In 1645–6 there was a very severe winter on the Borders, and many sheep and cattle were lost in the snow. In 1659–60 there was a frost on the Borders which lasted six weeks.

Gateshead. M. HOPE DODDS

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE 1930's were the waxworks period of this century. It is already a shock to go back and see ourselves as we were standing in declamatory phalanxes in that spiritual Tussaud. There we all are, a collection of drilled dummies wearing our party and ideological labels and rather sickly-faced in the stillness before the storm. That's how we were in the 30's. Simple visitors, kind relations from the country, are said sometimes to have mistaken us for human beings. But, like the static images and rhetorical figures in the poetry of the time, we stood paralysed in public attitudes ("What should a socialist woman do?" etc., etc.)—and one looks back upon it as a decade without private life or intimacy. The war has made all that incredible now. The labels are smudged, the ideologies are blurred. We are no longer mere anti-Fascist signatures or stage-frightened masks on public platforms. We have become human beings again. Not especially happy ones, of course; we are utterly insecure and are becoming quickly decivilised, living from day to day, blindly; but we are far less pretentious, and war has brought out our variety once more. Despite their terror and misery, the 'forties are more interesting than the 'thirties. We have become as much concerned with the human being in each other as with the doctrine. We watch with curiosity the new ties and confessions, the new adaptations, wonder what things in our war-time life foreshadow new things in the post-war world. Especially we note the new contradictions. These especially appeal to the Englishman, anyway, who is always relieved when dogma yields up its monotonous and shrill virginity.

There are some characteristic contradictions in Mr. Lewis Mumford's *Faith for Living* (Secker and Warburg, 7s. 6d.). He is an American who writes a discursive analysis of the origins and aims of Fascism and the causes of its success, but he does this from the point of view of ethics. The book is a warm attack on the immorality in Fascism, an almost evangelical call to physical and spiritual redemption and resistance and made to the heart rather than to the head. The phrase "save civilisation from Fascism" is no longer the slogan of the '30's; it is an SOS of the '40's. The foundation of Mr. Mumford's argument is not new. He protests against a solely economic interpretation of history and makes a reaffirmation of values:

> Values are not cemented on to the ugly structure of physical existence as in a bad piece of architecture without affecting either the function or the design. Values are, on the contrary, present from the very beginning. This is true historically of the development of all culture; and it is true in the development of the human personality within a culture.

But this stand is not made on the usual 19th-century Liberal grounds—not on the grounds of what he calls pragmatic Liberalism, now in decline—nor on the grounds of tradition in the reactionary or classical sense. The plea is not for capitalist liberty, but for the humane tradition we can trace back to Greece and Rome; and the evils he denounces are not new ones, but recurrent and lie in the nature of man:

> Unfortunately, it is not in Ricardo, Marx or Lenin but in Dante, Shakespeare and Dostoevsky that an understanding of the sources of Fascism are to be found. These sources are in the human soul not in economics.

The immediate immoral sources of Fascism are the machine, militarism and the cult of pomp; its passive accomplices are liberal detachment, pacifism of the spotless hands, the corruption of the Church, the gullibility of the wealthy who have stupefied themselves and their workers with the machine.

That is the destructive side of his revivalism and it is, of course, conventional. The book has not the brilliance of Silone's *School for Dictators*—which had rather much of the Italian fireworks about it for the ruminative English eye—but it is altogether richer in tone than the English attacks on Fascism I have read. These suffered from cool and melodious aloofness when they come from Liberals—as if a string quartet were sent out to drown a barrel organ—and, further Left, from the shouts of the open-air meeting. Mr. Mumford has the disadvantage of writing in the American post-Munich climate, and the advantage that the real war has begun. The defence of force does not make us hesitate any longer; we are content to believe once more in original sin and the necessity of evil. We can, indeed, smile indulgently at the Americans, as Mr. Mumford sets about putting the wind up them.

So far Mr. Mumford is orthodox. It is when he tells us how we are to save civilisation that the interesting contradiction appears. Look at his demands: sacrifice, a good death better than a demoralised long life, poverty, regeneration, a new order, religion, family, return to pre-machine age values, regionalism, even living space. Is this a speech by Hitler? Fascism for home consumption minus the cult of power? What is he suggesting? To fight Fascism with its shadow? Marxists would write Mr. Mumford off at once. But to say that to believe in ideal values at this stage is self-delusion, to argue that a belief in sacrifice, poverty, the family, the revival of the land and the restoration of personality makes one a Fascist is absurd. The evil of Fascism is not that it has advocated these things, but that it has flattered a deep human sense of their value, in order to obtain totally different ends, and chiefly a brutal absolute power. Mr. Mumford is not foolish enough to belive that a change of heart of itself will defend civilisation; he knows that it must fight with arms and make the sacrifice that implies. But it does seem that while the mystical change of heart is taking place, society will be in headlong flight. A new moral order, yes; but religion does not exist without churches, morals do not exist without social institutions, politics without forms, and sacrifice cannot be demanded without awarding social justice. To whom are we giving the blank cheque? Mr. Mumford seems to forget that, though there cannot be a good life without correct values, the application of them is conditioned by the organic collection of interests, which is what society is.

How is our war, in the civilised camp, bearing out some of the points in his argument? His attack on big cities: yes, our cities have fewer inhabitants. Their monopoly seems smaller. His warning that the middle classes must prepare for poverty and give up luxuries: this is happening. The return to the land: yes, that has happened, too. On less money and in greater safety than in towns a good life can be lived. People are discovering that, as the Romans did—in the decline, not the regeneration of civilisation. On the other hand, the war is driving an opposite and increased stream to the factories. Family life: the war has intensified the feeling for family life and the home—the separated families feel this as strongly as those forced to live much more on themselves. On the other hand, there is a much stronger tendency to communal life and some tendency to merely nomadic ways of living. The large 18th-century family such as Cobbett loved: impossible. That depends on cheap labour, an impoverished working class. The working class are better off. I do not say that any of these factors are permanent, but the contradictions are interesting because they indicate that on the revolutionary side there are always opposite currents: roughly, those that make for the form of the new life and those that make for its content. The stronger the new pull of the State the stronger the emotional pull of the family and the personality. See Zoshchenko's clownish innuendoes about the nostalgia for personal life in Russia.

Mr. Mumford's social pessimism makes him sentimental about country people at the expense of urban populations. Yet it is the rootless, devitalised, valueless city dwellers who have borne the brunt of the war, and have resisted with stoicism, vitality, resource and decency. Where are the riots? Where is the collapse? Why only a mystique of the soil? There is no sacrifice going on in rural England. In the Army it is the urban man who stands out. He is entirely more adaptable and instructed. In America, of course, rural life has not degenerated as it has with us.

Mr. Mumford's interest is that he is a good melting-pot. I fish out as a concluding example a piece of literary criticism. Attacking the corruption of values under capitalism, he says that two plays running in New York, *Tobacco Road* by Erskine Caldwell, and *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, are profoundly immoral. After 15 years of truce it is hard to return to the old literary rows about morality. The earlier charges were made by puritans preoccupied by sex; the later by puritans preoccupied first by politics and now by ethics. This is more serious criticism. What Mr. Mumford's objection is to these plays I do not know. He may mean it is immoral to portray an unbalanced character of no greatness sympathetically. Hamlet succeeds because he is a Prince and utters great thoughts; the neurotic hobo in *Mice and Men* fails because he can hardly utter any thoughts at all. Or Mr. Mumford may be objecting to the murder of the tramp by his friend, a sort of mercy-murder. What Mr. Mumford hints at is the need to return to the great classical themes. Again, one seems to be approaching shadow Fascism, for without defending Mr. Steinbeck—for I do not know the exact charge—it does seem to me that Mr. Steinbeck's own defence would lie on Christian grounds and not on an appeal to Euripedes.

A characteristic literature of to-day is the literature of the erratic and the humble: the joys of Mr. Steinbeck's hobo were unhomely but his destiny was obscure. A Protestant like Mr. Mumford should rejoice in this example of original sin which only Grace could redeem. My memory of the story is that Mr. Steinbeck did not rise above a simple pathos of treatment, edged by uneasiness; but I do not think that every study of compulsive mania need be treated as the Greeks treated the compulsion of Œdipus. In our time when society is in chaos, the common man becomes, despite himself, the phenomenon. Only settled times can contemplate the moral conflicts of great sinners, and, walking with Kings, can afford to lose the common touch. Revolution demands realism. V. S. PRITCHETT

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qualities that inform all the scraps and make the book homogeneous. The first requisite—the *sine qua non*—of a dramatic critic I take to be sheer childlike love of the theatre for its own sake: that evergreen thrill connected with a "treat," the expectant crowd in the vestibule, the curtain (next to a big gun the most portentous of objects), the dipping lights. For Mr. MacCarthy all this is as new to-day as it was at the beginning of the century; for him the adventure of watching and listening (he never misses a word or an inflection) is never stale; the *déjà vu* attitude is as far as possible from his reactions to any kind of play, which he judges strictly on its merits, be it *Othello, Rosmersholm*, or *Dinner at Eight*.

A love of the drama is common to most dramatic critics, but Mr. MacCarthy possesses the much rarer combination of a sense of the theatre and a mature system of artistic values. It is this cross-reference, so to speak, which enables him to write so illuminatingly of Shaw's *St. Joan*, of *The Maid's Tragedy*, of *Dear Brutus*. Where the ordinary critic was carried away by the dramatic skill of Shaw's trial scene, Mr. MacCarthy did not fail to notice the falsity of Joan's "Wordsworthian Protestant" speech about Nature and freedom. Where a purely literary mind like Swinburne's will swallow Elizabethan tragedy whole, Mr. MacCarthy turns a merciless eye on the shoddiness and inconsistency of the character drawing:

> The Elizabethan dramatists did not care about character. They did not grasp that character is an essential part of drama, especially of tragic drama, in which we must be moved if we are to be impressed æsthetically. They turned on passions like taps and turned them off again; they treated human emotions, virtues and vices as though they were signalmen's levers, which had only to be pulled to change the direction of the whole train.

That is worth saying and well said; but I think it expresses a half-truth. Indeed the only point in the book at which I join issue with the author is on the question of Elizabethan, and especially Shakespearian, character-drawing, which seems to me, in the light of modern psychological knowledge, truer than Mr. MacCarthy will allow. He complains, for instance, of critics who assert that Othello was not a jealous man; but surely the point is that the Moor was not *naturally* of a jealous—i.e., suspicious—temperament, and that it required an elaborate and cunning plot to make him so. And I cannot think it other than fantastic to assert that Iago is "not a real figure except in a poetic world." Why, I have met several Iagos myself in the course of a career only half as long as Mr. MacCarthy's! Few types are commoner than the ambitious man (or woman) of mediocre and uncertain mind in whom self-hatred and the desire to draw others to himself issues in a frightening malignity, since if he cannot, through weakness, do good he would rather do evil than make no impression at all. Would Mr. MacCarthy describe Hedda Gabler, for instance, as unreal except in a poetic world?

Perhaps the most useful quality in a dramatic critic—at any rate to actors and playwrights—is the faculty of instantaneously perceiving what a stage character is intended to be and whether or no it is consistently drawn (*a*) by the dramatist, (*b*) by the actor or actress. Almost every article in this volume displays the author's acumen in this field, and it is a delight to follow the understated praise or urbanely humorous disgust with which he has noted the sudden inspirations, subtleties, and absolute ineptitudes of the "sacred monsters," as Jean Cocteau has called them. For Mr. MacCarthy is a very polite writer, so that his indignation and fun-poking, when his literary or moral taste has been outraged, are the more devastating. I defy any reader not to laugh aloud at the author's account of his own experiences at a séance (p. 297 ff.), at sudden little skits like: "the defect of the third act is that nothing has prepared us for Lady Adela Skipworth's sudden *volte face*," or at the really appalling assault on Sentimentality in the notice of a play called *The Last Enemy*. Mr. MacCarthy in pugnacious mood is so enjoyable that I wish his editor had included his notice, which I remember having read, of H. G. Wells's *The Wonderful Visit* dramatised: it was a masterpiece of derision. Such pages deserve to live and to be read often—as doubtless they will be—for they are the exact expressions of an admirably realistic attitude to life which implies, as well as hatred of shams, a warmth and generosity and pity which must recommend the owner to all kinds of reader save what Mr. MacCarthy calls "a very carefully protected sensibility," by which I take him to mean the art-for-art's-sakist—a kind of person for whom, in any case, the theatre has, and can have, but little appeal.

But if the aesthete does well to profit by the awful example of Henry James and leave the stage to its own devices, the novelist or poet with an approach to the fundamental conditions of art sufficiently robust to permit him to attempt play-writing will find much sensible advice scattered through this book. The problem of how the novelist should adapt his talents and vision to the stage is a very interesting and important one, but I have never seen it receive more than perfunctory attention. Mr. MacCarthy touches on the central difficulty when he describes the paraphernalia of Maeterlinck's plays and calls them "things more real when spoken of than when seen." The novelist's characters are wraiths controlled only by the boundary where his own imaginative power meets that of his reader; his words and the events and gestures he describes have the powerful ambiguity of a musical phrase; his stage has a thousand exits and more varieties of lighting than even Nature herself can boast. Heard only in the splendid silence of an imaginary world, his dialogue—be it never so stilted—gets all the benefit of his reader's good will, since it is always in his own voice that the reader hears the characters speaking. On the discrepancy that must result when a number of real men and women, full of ambition but not always of very pliant imagination, attempt to interpret a writer's characters on the stage, I perhaps need not insist. Few novelists have withstood the ordeal. Somerset Maugham has succeeded in both worlds, but then his imagination is not of a high order and he makes no exorbitant demands. Galsworthy was a facile novelist and an adroit (though most unpleasing) dramatist, but the value of everything he wrote was vitiated—as Mr. MacCarthy implies in his review of that impossible play, *The Fugitive*—by a vulgar and sentimental view of life. He cannot be said, therefore, to have solved the double problem. Mr. Priestley has come much nearer to doing so; though there can be more than one opinion of his novels, they have imaginative qualities which Galsworthy never possessed, while in his plays he shows a brilliant theatrical technique and sometimes (e.g., the first two acts of *Music at Night*) a real sense of poetry.

For it is poetry which has got to return to the theatre if there is to be anything like a renaissance of drama in this country after the war, comparable to that already produced in painting by an astonishing outcrop of brilliant young men such as Graham Sutherland (poetry of Nature), John Piper (poetry of architecture), Henry Moore (poetry of the human form). The Auden-Isherwood-Spender group have made some preliminary experiments (again one wishes this volume could have been brought up to date, in order to include Mr. MacCarthy's comments on them), not very successful on the whole but full of a new kind of beauty. As Mr. MacCarthy

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objects, against the Philistine type of critic: "The intellectuals do justice to situations which arise out of the clash between simple and complex characters." This is a profound remark and implies a sphere of action to which a poetical approach is peculiarly appropriate. Mr. MacCarthy accuses the public and playwrights of 1921 of having no sense of tragedy and elsewhere speaks scathingly of the poverty of stage language to-day. Nothing could be truer; but a sense of poetry implies a sense of tragedy, and one may hope that this war—rhythmically and dynamically so different from the last—will restore them both to our writers. At any rate the air attack on London has given us the opportunity of a clean break with the bad old jog-trot "realism" of the Coward-Lonsdale type, which produced nothing but charades about trivial people living trivial lives and expressing trivial feelings in trivial language.

"Courage," says Mr. MacCarthy, "lies not so much in the power of looking forward to new things as in the power to break with the old." That is as true of the drama as it is of social life, for the one should reflect the other.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

GHOSTS

Come the Three Corners. By SIR HARRY BRITTAIN. *Hutchinson.* 7s. 6d.

Leninism. By JOSEPH STALIN. *Allen and Unwin*, cloth, 10s. 6d. *Lawrence and Wishart*, paper, 7s. 6d.

No, these two books are not worlds apart as it might seem at first sight, because they are linked by that queer smell of a dead past rising from the pages of them both.

So accustomed have we already become to the throb of the night bombers filling the air, that the time before this happened, those last pre-war years when we could all still air our views on how the catastrophe might be averted—those years have already been made to seem a childish, untidy and quite *other* period of history. What are these voices reminding us of the past?

There is Sir Harry Brittain who has not realised that the back of the *Times* was broken two years ago by a rather discreditable disease called "Appeasement":

> Major Astor is also, of course, the leading spirit in that great organ, the *Times*, which has done as much as any single factor for the Empire ideal and the telling of the Imperial effort in the present conflict. He is, if I may coin a phrase, the Ajax of the Thunderer.

And this other voice:

> This Trotsky-Bukharin bunch of spies, murderers and wreckers, who kow-towed to the foreign world, who were possessed by a slavish instinct to grovel before every foreign bigwig, and who were ready to enter his employ as a spy—this handful of people who did not understand that the humblest Soviet citizen, being free from the fetters of capital, stands head and shoulders above any high-placed foreign bigwig whose neck wears the yoke of capitalist slavery—who needs this miserable band of venal slaves?

Note the "foreign devil" style and rantings in miserable English, as if Big Bill Thompson of Chicago fame had strayed into the Kremlin. Last shriek—end of an era. Three months later Ribbentrop came to Moscow.

Introducing the 220 odd pages of mixed, unassorted fact and clichés he has called *Come the Three Corners*, Sir Harry Brittain, K.B.E., C.M.G., D.L., LL.D., mentions how the last three books, for which he has "been responsible," "have been made possible by the use of the Ediphone. I bless the late Mr. Edison." Was there not a fictional character of Aldous Huxley's who anticipated this technique? And in fact this book seems to have been written in the style Mr. Huxley invented for Sidney Quarles—in its form, subject-matter and quality. From the highest peaks in Pall Mall, Sir Harry surveys the Glorious Free Empire. "Australia will be There!"; Dominion soldiers display their customary bravery; Indian princes "rally magnificently"; native princes, chiefs, "commercial communities," sects and subjects (Heading: "Widows' Mites") contribute to the Spitfire Fund. Those Indian problems become as glaring as the glaring Indian sun; the Nazi views held by the Malanite opposition in South Africa, the economic catastrophe threatening the "one-product" colonies, the predatory Imperial stirrings among certain Americans, in fact, the whole real problems of 500 million souls are blandly waved aside. "Japan is the only Power in the whole Pacific whose armed forces are in unlawful occupation of territory not her own," said the *Times* without a flicker of irony only last week. The politics of this book are rather in this spirit, like a hangover from unreal Munich days when part of the British ruling class—which had almost admitted that its usefulness might be nearing an end—was suddenly filled with wild last-minute hope that thanks to Hitler, thanks to Nazism, the British Empire was *saved*, the clock turned back to say, 1913, and everything could go on just as it was. Seen in such retrospect, and as a good illustration of the uncomprehending British Tory mind (even the *real* strength with which this mind can cling to the past) Sir Harry Brittain's book is an interesting museum piece.

So for that matter is *Leninism*.

The only light touch in this new edition of Soviet oratory is that its printer (Trotskyist devilry or Freudian slip?) gave the title of the 1938 speech as "*Dialectical and Historical Imperialism*" instead of "Materialism." The publishers hastened to put in an "Erratum." Needlessly: this book, whose arid pages seem to-day as rigid as the monoblock bosom of an elderly Victorian charlady, might surely have been subtitled "The Road to Suomussalmi"—that Arctic battlefield of the first days of 1940 where Stalin suffered the vital defeat which sent him, however insensibly as yet, on the road of his decline. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler revealed himself pretty thoroughly. There is, of course, none of the same revelatory touch in this collection of Stalin's speeches, many of which are impersonal and dry-as-dust, and among which we meet such old friends as "*The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U. (B.)*" or the pep-talk, "*The Task of Business Executives*," beginning with such thrilling words as "Comrades! The deliberations of your conference are drawing to a close. You are about to adopt resolutions. I have no doubt that they will be adopted unanimously." In spite of this, however, and in spite of the unpardonably illiterate translation, read these speeches now one after the other, and through sheer repetitive effect something of the personality of this heavy enigmatic dictator will emerge. "Comrade Stalin is too rough," Lenin is reported to have exclaimed before his death. Yet his chief quality is surely not roughness, but lust for power combined with an unparalleled talent of putting his opponents, most of them middle-class intellectuals, in the wrong in every debate, every difference of opinion, and then, once he has achieved his victories, carrying them to lengths nobody could dream of.

Take, for instance, the brutality of this sneer against the leading intellectual of the Soviet Revolution, at the time (1928) still author of the best-known Soviet text-books:

> And this is said by the very Bukharin who is making (and has made in the past) a number of gross theoretical and practical mistakes, who only recently was a pupil of Trotsky, who only the other day was seeking to form a bloc with the Trotskyites against the Leninists and was paying them visits by the back door. Is it not funny, comrades?

No, if one knows the Soviet antecedents, not funny—tragic! One can feel something utterly relentless, like the progress of an ice breaker

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going through very thin ice, in Stalin's unbroken journey to absolute personal power, first over the inner Kremlin circles, then over 150 million human beings. In truth, it is a story of a madness spreading over the Kremlin, over Moscow, over the whole bound Soviet Union. One can see this clearly in recent speeches:

> In 1937 Tukachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich and other fiends were sentenced to be shot. After that, the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. were held. In these elections, 98.6 per cent. of the total vote was cast for the Soviet Power. At the beginning of 1938 Rosengoltz, Rykov, Bukharin and other fiends were sentenced to be shot. After that, the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics were held. In these elections 99.4 per cent. of the total vote was cast for the Soviet Power.
>
> Where are the symptoms of "demoralisation," we would like to know, and why was this "demoralisation" not reflected in the results of the elections? (*Laughter.*)

Tiberius, aging, sated at Cape Misenum, arguing his defence: even if he had killed them all, Drusus, Germanicus, Sejanus and his other colleagues, was not all Rome an inferno where friend betrayed friend and wives with a smile poisoned their husbands?

And the moral of these two books from the 1919–39 age? Behind each is a glimmer of truth. Soldiers of every race and colour, from Indians to Abyssinians, *are* fighting under the British flag for what they feel their freedom, and would fight in ten times greater numbers but for the artificial non-comprehension of British Imperialists. And beneath the paralysing weight of the Stalin dictatorship, there still lies the great human plan of the Soviet Revolution, which must never be lost again. Surely, the moral, therefore, is that after the dissolution of rigid Sahib Imperialism and the rigid Stalin regime, the social organisation of the world may be a much swifter and more spontaneous process than we may think to-day.

T. R. FYVEL

DETAILS

More Details from Pictures in the National Gallery. Introduction by SIR KENNETH CLARK. National Gallery 7*s.* 6*d.*

We cannot be too grateful to Sir Kenneth for this civilised surprise; for a surprise it will be to all those who, like myself, had no notion that he was preparing a second volume. Here we are given three distinct and unlooked for pleasures: the pleasure of contemplating unfamiliar beauty; the pleasure of amazement (for there can be no doubt that many of these fragments, seen out of their context, are amazing); and the pleasure of guessing and sometimes guessing right. If this second volume seems a thought less appetising than the first, that may be because Sir Kenneth had already taken the cream off his collection, or it may be that we have been spoilt. I suspect the latter cause.

In an admirable preface a number of tender spots are lightly touched. "Looking at Titian's free, expressive brushwork one is more than ever astonished at the fuss caused by the impressionists and Cézanne." Surely Sir Kenneth Clark is pretending to be a good deal simpler than he is; for he knows well that the people who screamed at Cézanne were quite incapable, from lack of intelligence, taste and knowledge, of looking into a picture and appreciating its subtleties. They screamed simply because these pictures were unlike what they were used to; and it is notable that scholars, apt to study widely and dig deep, though knowing and caring little about contemporary movements, found nothing shocking in the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. It was newspaper men, professionals and schoolmasters who set up the hullabaloo.

Again it is good to hear the director of the National Gallery reminding us that Frith's productions are "bad" and "false," and putting that popular illustrator in his place—far below the mediocre Teniers. In the cult of Victorianism, which has been rampant these twenty years, Frith has come in for a deal of unmerited praise from people who ought to know better. Is it too much to hope that this confrontation of a bit of *Derby Day* with the foreground of Teniers' *Village Fête* will restore sanity to their judgment? Probably it is. Another overrated painter whose essential meanness is betrayed in a detail is Caravaggio. The astonished artisan from *Christ at Emmaus* has much in common with the *rastas* and cadgers of *Derby Day*; and it is a pity that to confront it something better could not have been found than the St. John from the Ansidei Madonna. Am I right in thinking that, in the photograph, there is something wooden, something pump-handlish, about the arm of the Greco angel (Plate 16)? I had not noticed it in the original; and I was almost as much taken aback by this apparent awkwardness as by the staggering beauty of the hand in Rembrandt's *Flora.*

This is a book to possess. It will absorb, or at least divert, from other matters, the attention of anyone who cares for painting. It is delightful, but it is also painful. For it is mortifying to be convicted of slovenly superficiality, and that is what happens when one is left bewildered and fumbling for a name before a scrap artfully excised from some well-known masterpiece. The shocks are numerous and, incidentally, instructive. Sir Kenneth has pointed out that if amateurs had studied more intelligently the work of Titian they would not have made such fools of themselves when shown the work of the Impressionists and Cézanne. He might have added that, had they looked more closely into the background of Tintoretto's *St. George and the Dragon*, they could have swallowed Van Gogh at a gulp.

CLIVE BELL

THE PRESIDENCY OF THE UNITED STATES

The President: Office and Powers. By E. S. CORWIN. *Oxford Press.* 28*s.*

For over thirty years now Professor Corwin has been, with Professors Beard and T. R. Powell, one of a little group of men who have done much to revolutionise the study of the American Constitution. In essence, their achievement has been its humanisation; they have penetrated behind the legal forms to the men and the social forces that have made it what it is. The present book is Professor Corwin's outstanding achievement. It has abundance of learning, gracefully used; it is written with that ease of style which makes everything he writes a pleasure to read. If it has a fault, it is that it does not deal forthrightly with the interesting and important assumptions upon which it is written; perhaps that is Professor Corwin's tribute to the American academic belief that a teacher whose major premisses are, to use Mr. Justice Holmes' term, inarticulate, is thereby proving his impartiality. But this is a book of the first order which is quite certain to remain for many years the vital authority upon its theme.

The central argument of the book is its insistence that some way now needs to be found to stabilise the relationship between the President and Congress. In a sense, all the massive illustration Professor Corwin has provided turns around this emphasis. In quiet times, Congress tends to reduce the President to futility; in epochs of crisis the danger of his excessive authority is real. Professor Corwin does not regret the growth of Presidential powers in modern times. The developments he notes are, in his view, "the direct consequence

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of Democracy's emergence from the constitutional chrysalis." But he desires a leadership which is a safeguard, first against the accidents of personality, and, second, against the absence of independent advice which the President is compelled to weigh. To this end he has proposed a new form of cabinet government; and his suggestion deserves some careful consideration.

Briefly, it is that the President's cabinet shall consist, not, as now, of heads of the executive departments, but of a nucleus from these together with the leaders of Congress; and to them, he suggests, should be added, as business warrants, the heads of government agencies and the chairmen of Congressional committees. This scheme, says Professor Corwin, " would capture and give durable form to the casual and fugitive arrangements by which Presidents have usually achieved their outstanding successes in the field of legislation."

Any suggestion that Professor Corwin makes in the field he has made so specially his own obviously deserves respectful discussion. I yet do not feel that the proposal he makes really furthers the end he has in view. There is not only the difficulty, to which he refers, that either, or both, Houses of Congress may be of a different political party from the President. There is the problem of size. From the present cabinet, on any showing, the President needs the Secretaries of State, of the Treasury, of War and of the Navy, and, I suspect, of Agriculture; and he will need the Attorney-General as legal adviser. He will need the Speaker and the Floor-Leader from the House of Representatives and the chairmen of at least six of its committees; and he will need a similar number from the Senate. To make this body work, it must be built of men with whom the President is at ease, men whom he knows and trusts, men with whom he is confident he can work. Granted the way in which Congressional leaders are chosen, does Professor Corwin think this is likely to prove a creative body? I cannot but think that, if it were effective, it would in fact result in putting the Presidency into commission. More than that, it would go far to neutralising the vital Presidential power, so valuable in periods of crisis, of appealing to public opinion against an obstructive Congress. All the merits of the suggestion are at present available to a wise President who has grasped the art of leading Congress; and to transform those means into a permanent organ of consultation would, I suspect, make for undesirabilities it is difficult to exaggerate. It would maximise the prospect of deals and manoeuvres especially in the dangerous field of the patronage. Above all, I think, it would, especially in quiet times, lead to a regrettable increase in Congressional power at the expense of Presidential influence.

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But it is unnecessary to accept Professor Corwin's positive proposals to have real gratitude for an analysis of the greatest elective office in the world as profound as it is compelling. The book is evidence of the fact that, at the moment, in the field of institutional analysis, the Americans have no superiors and, perhaps, no equals. An understanding of the facts it discusses would be invaluable to British statesmen at this time. I hope the American publisher will send a copy of the volume to Lord Halifax.

HAROLD J. LASKI

SATIRE AND PARODY

Sagittarius Rhyming. *Cape.* 5s.

Here is a writer who needs no introduction to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION readers. Sagittarius is one of our very few present-day satirical writers—a craftsman working in a strong old English tradition which has grown unfortunately weak during the past two generations. There have been, of course, good satires by one writer and another; but, these apart, whom have we had in recent years but Belloc and Chesterton to compare with past giants? One plausible reason for the lack of satirists is the confusion of twentieth-century morals; for your satirist is essentially a moralist, and cannot scourge the Wrong effectively unless he has some clear conception of the Right. A general feeling of disillusionment, however penetrating the mind of the disillusionist, does not make satire.

Sagittarius has his moral values—which are mainly expressed in the foreign field—quite clear and definite. He is not yet, however, a full-fledged satirist, but more of a parodist. Rather more than one-half of the poems in this book are parodies; and of the thirty odd which I marked as so good that I would quote them if I had space, I find upon investigation that twenty are parodies. Parody is an easier task than original satire, just as it is easier to write with topical words to one of Sullivan's tunes than to write a new witty song of your own; half the work has been done for you. Moreover, in a parody a single brilliant line or lines, particularly at the opening or the close, often suffices to carry off an entire poem. Sagittarius is particularly good at opening lines, for example:

" Is there anybody there? " said Mr. Attlee,
Pointing to the Treasury Bench.

Of Goering's proposed visit:

Lord Halifax regrets he can't promise a welcome
to-day, Marshal.

Of Mr. Chamberlain's late supporters:

Dead daffodils, we weep to see
You hung about so late.

Of the Spanish War:

O Eden, go and call the volunteers.

Of the Runciman Mission:

" Will you give a little farther," said his lordship to the Czechs.

I had listed a dozen others, including the charming Wordsworthian skit on Federal Unionists, the poem called " O God! O Washington! " and the adaptation of Innisfree to Government departmental shelters, but—

But parody, except Lewis Carroll's parody, does not live long. If a satirist wants his satires to live, he must write them himself. And there is indication that Sagittarius can do that, if he will. I should like to quote one specimen, the fierce poem on Guernica:

Black birds over Guernica roaring and wheeling,
fighters and bombers hawking and swooping in chase
over the tottering churches, the farmsteads, the reeling
houses and market-place,

filling the eyes with the image of terror, and filling
the ears with the screams of the buried under the walls,
droning and drumming, soaring and zooming, rending and killing
glutted as darkness falls.

Leaving the place of their feasting blackened and burning,
leaving the ruins for omen, the dead for a sign,
blackbirds voided of death to their eyries returning
honoured over the Rhine.

Who shall avenge Guernica? None will avenge her,
it is not the blood of our children that cries from the ground.
Death has no summons to call from the sky the revenger,
the murdered make no sound.

Over our shifts and surrenders, connivance unending,
hover the smoke and the reek of that smouldering pyre,
We will remember Guernica when black birds descending
Our cities set on fire.

Anyone who can write that need not bother to parody.

MARGARET COLE

MISS BOWEN'S STORIES

Look at All Those Roses. By ELIZABETH BOWEN. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

I believe it was W. B. Yeats who described the present age as exceptionally rich in *minor* poetry. It is a happy description, and it applies at least equally well to fiction, in which the short story is the equivalent of minor verse—something, that is to say, lesser in scope and range but not inferior in quality. Look to the eminent novelists of the last twenty years, and will you find four substantial enough to make up a half-dozen with Joyce and Lawrence? Yet the short story in the same period is perhaps more numerously and variously successful than it has ever been. In spite of commercial discouragement (the first thing every publisher's office-boy learns by heart is " Novels pay; short stories don't ") there has been a remarkable crop of writers whose talents have turned to the short story in preference to the novel. I don't profess to know the reason, but my guess would be that contemporary literature—when it is not merely ideological—is dominated by its poets; and the short story is as near poetry as fiction can get. It is capable of a comparably great compression; and its total gesture, its meaning, is not rendered solely in terms of narrated drama or of explicit ideas, but in the elusive quality of " tone." Blake's poem, *I Told My Love*, is as good an example of tone as anything I know. Neither the intellectual content nor the described incidents are of the slightest importance compared with the precise emotional pitch of the poem: a whole complicated mood is broached and resolved in those few finely shaped lines. What the modern short story has achieved is a prose equivalent to that sort of lyric poem.

The Disinherited, by Elizabeth Bowen, is probably as good as anything written in this vein since Katherine Mansfield and D. H. Lawrence. Miss Bowen has that fineness of touch which records the exact range of tone in a subject of light calibre, without blurring it. *A Love Story* in her latest volume, *Look at All Those Roses*, is an excellent example of this talent at its best. The drama is held back from completion, the characters remain in shadow. It is as if, in a game of cards, one hand were never disclosed. In a full-length novel this reserve is almost impossible to sustain, and under those conditions Miss Bowen has in some of her earlier novels partly lost control of her characters. But in *A Love Story* she reveals just so much as is needed to bring out all that the situation contains. The tension and the vividness of the story are, in fact, grounded in this expert economy. Three couples in an Irish hotel momentarily touch each other's lives. Very little is said about them, and yet every essential clue is given for a hundred pages of realistic portrayal and psychological analysis. It is the kind of condensation in which Miss Bowen, at her best, excels. None of the characters, in the bare outline which is sketched, would mean anything alone: woven together in a pattern of glancing inter-relationships, they achieve that plangency which is the mark of poetry. Everything that would be worth saying about them is crystallised in a few interrupted scenes and some inconclusive dialogue.

Inevitably not all the stories are so successful as this one. I quote it as the choicest example of Miss Bowen's skill, but even the least substantial stories are attractively decorated with a sharp wit and a vigorously phrased insight.

> Eunice and Isabelle Evers were both just over fifty: their unperplexed lives showed in their faces, lined only by humour, and in their frank high foreheads . . . Like successful nuns, they both had a slightly married air . . . They were past-mistresses at blowing that bubble world that is blown for children by children—loving grown-ups—perhaps, also, the dearest of their own pleasures lay there. If they had any fantasies, these centred round ponies and bread-and-jam on the beach, and they still received intimations of immortality.

In *A Walk in the Woods*, the central characters just fail to hold the centre of the stage, but the context of the story—the atmosphere of the woods, the behaviour of the holiday visitors—is beautifully handled.

> Most of the Londoners lacked a sense of direction. Directly they were out of the sight of the road, an atavistic fear of the woods invaded them. Willing or unwilling they walked in circles, coming back again and again to make certain they had not lost their cars . . . Walking between the pillars of the trees, the men squared their shoulders—as though they inherited savage dignity. The matronly women protestingly rolled as they walked on their smart heels . . . Now and then, recalling a pottery vase at home, they would strip off their gloves and reach for a fan-like spray of gold bush leaves.

In *Attractive Modern Homes*, again, the whole background of local mood, of social category, of spiritual climate, is filled in swiftly and with an exciting aptness of phrase. Miss Bowen is an uncommonly sensitive observer of the furniture of life, the house, the locality, the niceties of social caste, the codified overtones of small talk. Her eye for these things is witty, animated, at times caustic. Her characters advance from a background which, however much it may be abbreviated, is always exactly calculated and assessed and brought to bear on the story.

Look at All Those Roses is a representative selection of Miss Bowen's stories, ranging from the slightly macabre title story to the *petite* irony of *Oh Madam*. Perhaps Miss Bowen is at her happiest when, as in *Attractive Modern Homes* and *The Easter Egg Party*, she is blending a tenderly malicious wit with an unexpected intimation of remote horror (incidentally, not unlike Auden). Altogether this is an impressive achievement, the best group of stories since V. S. Pritchett's *You Make Your Own Life*. Miss Bowen is a worthy successor to Katherine Mansfield.

DESMOND HAWKINS

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

South-East Africa, 1488-1530. By ERIC AXELSON. *Longmans.* 15s.

This book is not history: it is research. One of the misfortunes into which contemporary history-writing has fallen (led by the nose by the University professionals) is that research has got quite above itself. Instead of being a quarry for a history-writing that is distinct in methods, aim and quality from the process that delivers the raw materials, research has been made identical with, even superior to, history. The professionals deny the title of everything but research to be "original history." It is important that the rest of the world should preserve a different and better criterion of what is history.

When I say that this book is research, I do not mean that it is a bad book or even a dull book: and the research is very thorough. What I mean is that it is documentary rather than finished history. It has not taken for its realm what Toynbee calls "an intelligible field of study"; it makes no attempt at a rational perspective. Its subject is the quite arbitrary one of the S.E. coast of Africa between 1488 and 1530. The period taken is not so irrational as the area; for by 1530 Portuguese exploitation of this coast could be written down a failure. But the author's strict attachment to his chosen area precludes anything but the most casual connection with the background in the Portuguese home land and it precludes any connection at all with the great Portuguese Empire in India, the chief cause for the experiment on the S.E. coast of Africa.

On the other hand, this book throws light on a neglected and important facet of the history of European expansion; it corrects several errors accepted in the standard works; and out of the material it provides important generalisations can be pieced together. It will be useful one day to whoever writes the true history of these events; and in the meantime it will be profitable and interesting to anyone who has some knowledge of the general background.

The most important points that emerge are: the placing of da Gama's voyage in proper perspective. It had been preceded ten years before by a careful testing of the route to India *from both ends*. Dias was sent to probe his way as far round the southern end of Africa as possible (incidentally he gave the Cape of Good Hope its present name, and not the Cape of Storms). At the same time Pedro da Covilhã (who had a knowledge of Arabic) was despatched to India. He assessed the importance of Calicut; perhaps got as far as Sofala, only a little way ahead of the furthest point in Africa reached by Dias; sent home a full report from Cairo; then went to Abyssinia to find out about Prester John and was so useful there that he was never allowed to depart. In the author's words, "Dias and Covilhã blazed the trail; da Gama simply blundered along it." The Arabic world of the Indian Ocean was not so absolutely isolated from the West as is often supposed. The Portuguese found an Italian-speaking pilot at Malindi, the most northerly point they reached on the East African coast; and they later found a German at Calicut.

Some fresh light is thrown on the Arabic domination of the Indian Ocean. The Arabs handled all the trade of Africa as far South as Sofala; the purpose of their trade was to secure the gold of Sofala; but to do so they established an elaborate network of commerce. Arab equipment was superior to Portuguese, especially in charts and instruments. But they lacked artillery, and their boats were without

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nails. The material arrogance and cocksureness of the Portuguese was amazing, as was their cruelty. To begin with, they bombarded Moçambique to teach it a lesson in European manners, and " when we were weary of doing this we returned to the ships to dine." Once, da Gama came across a shipload of Mecca pilgrims in the Indian Ocean; he primed the ship with gunpowder and fired it with its human cargo. Safe-conducts were disregarded, pilots were seized by force and flogged on suspicion of giving false information. Moçambique became the central port of call to India and the entrepot for coastal trade. Through all the adventures and abominations of the Portuguese pioneers the strict control exerted by the home government is striking.

The Portuguese had no belief in the natural superiority of the new route they had opened up; but took the precaution of interrupting by force the Red Sea-Indian Ocean route. There is a good chapter on the ships used by the Portuguese in these adventures.

The brutality of the Portuguese reacted on their own heads. The South-East coast of Africa turned out not to possess very good ports of call; and the supply of gold at Sofala was very spasmodic. For its sake the Portuguese ruined the Arab economy in Africa and could put nothing in its place. Soon economic stringency and corruption set in. By 1530 the exploitation of this coast was a failure; which is perhaps the explanation why this is the one part of the Portuguese and Spanish Empires left alone by the Jesuits.

There is a fascinating account of a piece of historical detection by which the author found the Padroe or cross erected by Dias to mark the farthest point he reached. There is also an admirable reconstruction of the exploration of South Rhodesia by Antonio Fernandes in 1514 in an attempt to discover the sources of Sofala gold. Various native tribes then occupied the same areas in which they were again found over 300 years later.

P. C. GORDON WALKER

Week-end Competitions

No. 575

Set by Thomas Smallbones

Competitors are invited to use Marvell's *Ode on Cromwell's Return from Ireland* as a model for a 20 line ode on Mr. Wendell Willkie. For the benefit of those who have not their Marvells with them I quote one verse as a pattern:

He nothing common did nor mean
Upon that memorable scene
        But with a keener eye
        The axe's edge did try.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, February 17th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 572

Set by J. L. Hodson

We offer the usual prizes for a conversation between two British soldiers on first sighting the Invading Host in the Channel. The two soldiers might be two Other Ranks, or two officers or one of each, no limit being set to rank. Competitors may choose any time of day or night and any weather, and should limit themselves to 200 words.

Report by J. L. Hodson

If brevity were indubitably the soul of wit some of these entries would be stamped with genius. Witness R. S. Jaffray's:

" We'll talk of this later on."

" All right, but I still maintain you ought to have led me back a diamond." (They get busy).

There's one which gets three lines out of four words and then bursts into a pyrotechnic display of exclamation marks. Oaths are all very well and Mr. Atkins will doubtless use them, but they can't stand lone as sentries; not here. J. W. F. Hurford's

" What's the German for 'bastard'? "

" Why? "

" You'll need it in a minute,"

reaches a crescendo that would not have come amiss to Mrs. Bloom. A lot go strong for imperturbability and we can't complain of it. There's the Brigadier of C. M. Grosett who after listening to his Brigade-major growing lyrical over E boats, U-boats, Panzer Divisions, 70 transports and 150 motor barges with tanks is moved to exclaim " Gad! It's going to be a fine day"; I like D. D. Rathbone's private who promptly starts to make a book, offering 2 to 1 against any lad giving the time of first landing within 5 minutes, and both the General who insists on finishing the last 3 holes at Sandwich and the two privates who settle down again to the *Filmgoer* because they reckon Jerry will be another 15 minutes in landing, are in the vein.

L. Gooch's officer (ex B.B.C. commentator) ends rapturously " The sea's all lit up! It's on fire! All lit up!"

"Tor" has a good line—"Little ole 'Itler 'imself—makin' a personal appearance for the first and last time on this 'ere coast." There's a finish to another that takes my fancy:

2nd soldier: " Well, wot I sez is—(Third loud explosion very near) Wot I sez is, she never oughter 'ave married him. (Bombardment).

The vernacular can be rich. Eliza Doolittle had nothing on Allan M. Laing's: " Cheer up, chum! There's allus the Ome Gawd, an if they fyles us in the ahr of trial, Itler'll still av ter reckon wiv ther WATS. Therell al-ways be a Hengland"; and Frank Tilsley could hardly take realism beyond this from the lips of a former Lancashire loom-tackler now a Major in the R.E.'s: " B' C . . . ! T'men 'd swim t' bloody sea after yon lot, if t' Navy turned 'em back now." A. W. Clarke has a pleasantly ironical tale of how the Germans were annihilated because the Admiral and the General wouldn't leave their cards, lack of orders resulting in the Germans being spiflicated at point-blank range. Nobody need be downhearted while we have two privates like L/Cpl. Rhys's, who divided the invaders between them: " Speedboats, thahsans of 'em. . . Look, Bert, Stewkas. I'll take e'm. *You* cover the boats! Come on, Jerry! Good ol' Jerry!"

The entries are not a brilliant lot and there's nothing to shake the heavens in these of Ronald Mason and Richard Pomfret. They've got a genuine ring, however, and I like both a touch of exaltation in Mr. Mason's private and the magnificent understatement in Mr. Pomfret's final line. I suggest the prizes be divided.

Scene: Channel coast.

Lt. Ffoulkes }
Pte. Atkins } on watch.

Officer equipped with field-glasses, private with field telephone.

Lt. Ff: (with glasses): Pte. Atkins!

Pte. A. (smartly): Sir?

Lt. Ff. (as if reciting, rapidly): Report immediately to headquarters large fleet of hostile craft sighted advancing in Channel approximately 10,000 yards East-North-East of guardpost 3, allowing for defective visibility!

Pte. A. (smartly): Very good, sir! (At telephone) That headquarters? Post 3 'ere. That Bill? You can ring yer ruddy bells, Bill, 'ere come the b...

RONALD MASON

Two Lancashire privates have first sight of the Invading Host in the Channel.

" Yon'll be um, Fred."

" Wheer?"

" Theer—just unner t'left-'and side o' yon big cleawd."

" Thart seein' things, Joe. *Aw* corn'd see nowt."

" Howd thi 'ush a minnut. . . . Theer! yoh con 'ear their injins."

" Yigh, lad, thart beawnt be reet. Conta mek eawt heaw monny booats they're fetchin'?"

" Nod gradely weel, bud there'll be a tooathri, yoh con bet."

" We'd best let t'gaffers know abeawt this job, heawt be."

" Aye, id'ud be as weel. Thee b . . . r off, Fred, as fast as tha con go."

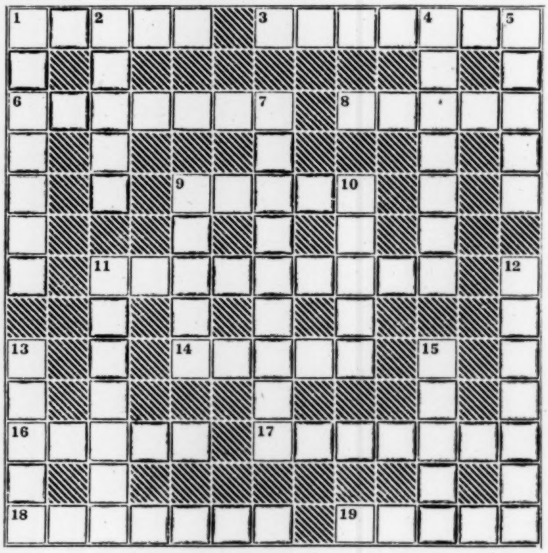
" O' reet—but thart *sure*, Joe? Aw dorn'd want to look a gobbin ower t'job."

" Yigh, yon's booats reet enough."

" Aw'll be skiftin' then. Thee keep thi eye on 'em, lad. They're up to no good, isn'd yon."

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 18

Set by V. S.



The last week's winner is
P. Nichols, 48 Church Way, Whetstone, N.20.

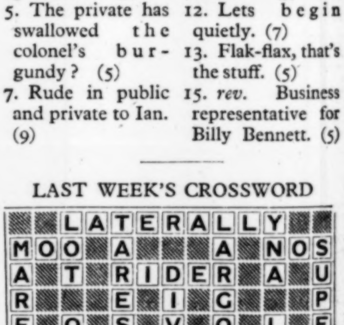
ACROSS

1. Living in the cell is Mr. Churchill about alas to be beheaded. (5)
3. Mum's the word to say the least of it. (7)
6. *rev.* Marked down for 100 per cent. Profit Tax? (7)
8. Sound specific. (5)
9. In short no saint has sex appeal. (5)
11. Imbecile camp-follower. (9)
14. A doctor gets sick of the stuff. (5)
16. Sterner? (5)
17. *rev.* She must have been still. (7)
18. Chicken essence. (7)
19. The equestrienne might reflect on the matter. (5)

DOWN

1. Hanging at the last gasp about. (7)
2. Made a profit out of fratricide at 6? (5)
4. Order the fellow to keep his appointment. (7)
5. The private has swallowed the colonel's burgundy? (5)
7. Rude in public and private to Ian. (9)
9. Human being twice cut off with a penny. (5)
10. Spirit for mile-a-second World Tour. (5)
11. Receives a cable saying " Crown Bob Brown." (7)
12. Lets begin quietly. (7)
13. Flak-flax, that's the stuff. (5)
15. *rev.* Business representative for Billy Bennett. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," "NEW STATESMAN AND NATION," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By URBANUS

SELLING UP IN AMERICA—WOOLWORTHS AND THE CHAIN STORES—CONVERTING GILT EDGED DEBT

IT is a serious matter when Sir Edward Peacock, of Barings, has to go to the United States to explore the possibility of realising our "direct investments" in that country. It is eloquent of the delay in making effective the financial aid which the American people desire to extend to their brother democracy at war. But it is a pity that Sir Edward was not instructed to "explore the possibility" of selling our not so valuable direct investments in South America. Could not Mr. Wendell Willkie, a great utility executive, prevail upon his big business colleagues to buy our electric light and power, railway and other public utility interests in the Latin American Republics? Commercially we do not need these investments so badly as, say, Courtaulds needs its American Viscose subsidiary or British Celanese its holding in Celanese Corporation of America or Shell Transport its interest in Shell Union or Distillers its export branch in Delaware or British American Tobacco its American tobacco subsidiaries or Turner and Newall its control of Kenshey and Mattison or Borax Consolidated its large American properties or English Sewing Cotton its control of the American Thread Company. Doubtless Imperial Chemical Industries would suffer no harm in being forced to sell its large holdings in Allied Chemical, Du Pont and General Motors, which are extraneous to its business, but the disposal of the other "direct investments" I have mentioned may have a serious effect upon some of the British parents, especially in the matter of exports and "goodwill." There is, of course, no moral reason why these large companies should not be treated exactly as the small individual investors have been treated, that is, being subject to forcible expropriation of their American interests, but it seems a pity that Sir Edward Peacock should not be trying to raise dollars against the pledging of these direct investments for the duration of the war instead of realising cash by their direct sale. If Mr. Henry Morganthau, Secretary of the U.S. Treasury, is right in saying that we have undertaken to sell out within a year "every bit of property we own in America," then the urgency of the dollar demand or the delay in securing American financial aid is much more serious than most of us realised.

* * *

The maintenance of the dividend (65 per cent.) and the further rise in trading profits announced by Woolworths surprised everyone, including your contributor. How do they do it in the face of the growing restriction of the home trade? The answer appears to be twofold. First, the full effect of the restriction orders will not generally be apparent in trading accounts before 1941. The present woven textile order runs until March 31 and is then due to be extended, perhaps in a more severe form. The present miscellaneous order covering most household and personal goods is already drastic enough but did not start to operate until December 1st last. Secondly, what little effect in 1940 was felt by the home trade as a direct result of restriction orders was probably offset in the case of Woolworths and the other chain stores by the switching over of customers from small shopkeepers. Obviously the small shop cannot offer as wide a supply of goods. The manufacturers who are restricted by quota will no doubt tend to favour the big chains in the allocation of their reduced supplies to retailers. So Woolworths, Marks and Spencer, British Home Stores and other chain stores have the pull once again over the small shopkeeper, but how long will these advantages protect their trading accounts from decline? I suspect that the restriction of the home trade this year will become so severe that chain store trading profits are bound to feel the pinch. As Woolworths 5*s.* shares at 55*s.* 6*d.* do not yield 6 per cent. on the basis of last year's dividend I think they are fully valued.

* * *

Interest is one of the first expenses which should be saved or curtailed in time of war. Surely it is the Government's duty to use its powers to save the interest bill of local authorities and Dominion Governments engaged in the common fight. But what has the Treasury done to put its control of the gilt-edged market at the disposal of these hard-pressed borrowers? It is actually withholding permission for new issues in this market for purely conversion purposes, and in reply to a question in the House of Commons last week Captain Crookshank said that the Treasury had no present intention of relaxing its ban. Why? Surely the Treasury control of the gilt-edged market is now effective enough to permit conversion issues by local authorities and Dominion Governments. The nominal amount of home corporation issues waiting for conversion to a lower rate of interest is in excess of £30,000,000. Surely it is to the national good to enable them to save, say, £500,000 a year in interest. Is it not opportune for the Treasury to assume wartime responsibility for local government debt and grant loans and effect conversions or redemptions as the need arises? The L.C.C. showed its enterprise recently by calling £13¾ millions of its 5 per cent. consolidated loans for repayment on April 30th next out of moneys freed by the conversion of its 3 per cent. Metropolitan Consolidated stock. Apart from the local authorities the Dominion Governments have the right to call a large stock of 5 per cent. and 6 per cent. debt outstanding for which they are entitled to expect help from the Treasury or Bank of England.

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TWO or three furnished rooms in pleasant house, reception area, offered to intelligent people, any race or religion. Share expenses. Daily access London possible. Near co-educational school. Box 8602.

WELL-APP. boarding house in Hampstead has vacancies; h. and c., gas-fires, rings; meals (English, Continental and dietetic) optional. MAI. 6916.

FITTLEWORTH, Sussex. Fortrie Guest House. Comfort. Breakfast in bed if desired. 'Phone: 61.

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CHILTERN VILLAGE, 33 miles London. To let: bed-room and sitting-room, 1 or 2 persons; service, hot water; 35*s.* Plus food if reqd. Telephone, electricity. Box 8619.

ROCKINGHAM, Westward Ho! Devon. Quiet, comf. hse., peaceful sur. Mod. inc. terms. MISS FOLL. Northam 183.

MODERN small hotel. WHITE LODGE HOTEL, Saltdean, Sussex. Rottingdean 9614.

WOODY-BAY HOTEL, Parracombe, N. Devon. Quiet, peaceful, safe area. H. & C. all rooms, spring mattresses, good food, farm produce, central heating, licensed. From 3½ *guineas* inclusive. Parracombe 64.

BLENHEIM, Bovey Tracey, S. Devon. Lovely gardens, orchards. Central heating and H. and C. in bedrooms.

HOME in open country between Billingshurst and Horsham. *Two Guineas.* WARNER, HOOK COTTAGE, BILLINGSHURST.

QUIET country accom. nr. St. Ives offered 2 people. Particulars, MRS. "D," The Cottage, New Mill, nr. Penzance.

PEACE and comfort for long or short stay. Vegetarian diet. FAY K. JONES, Beck Allans, Grasmere. 'Phone: 129.

REQUIRED by two ladies, unfurnished accommodation of four rooms and kitchen; house or rooms on ground floor; usual services; in Bucks, Herts or Wiltshire. Box 8595.

WANTED immediately, N.W. district, quiet furnished ground floor bed-sitting-room (or bed and sitting-room) with breakfast and evening meal, hot baths, fires, etc., for two gentlemen sharing. Box 8609.

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Rates and all information on page 148

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning Service only. February 9th, at 11.30. C. K. SCOTT: "HUMAN PERFECTIBILITY."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, February 9th, at 11 a.m. Dr. C. E. M. JOAD, M.A., D.Litt.: "SOME NAZI PHILOSOPHY." Admission free.

HAMPSTEAD'S Protest Meeting against Suppression of the *Daily Worker*. Violet Lansbury, Comdr. E. P. Young, and local speakers. Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, N.W.3. Sunday, February 9th, 2.45 p.m.

SOVIET STAMPS. Display by Mr. J. BARRY, 9 Fitzroy Square, W.1. Sat., Feb. 15th, 2.15. Tickets, 6*d*. (S.C.R. Members free.)

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, Wedderburn Road, Hampstead, now at Yarkhill Court, nr. Hereford (Tel.: Tarrington 233). Boys and girls, 4–16. Emphasis on languages. Special teaching methods. Modern dietary. MRS. E. PAUL, Ph.D.

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THE BYRON HOUSE SCHOOL, The Orchard, CAMBRIDGE. Recognised by Board of Education. Boarding and Day School for boys and girls aged 3–13 years. Apply PRINCIPAL.

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THE INITIATIVE

THIS week the initiative belonged to the British, on land, at sea and in the air. In Africa the Army of the Nile completed the occupation of Cyrenaica while the Free French from Lake Chad raided the oasis of Koufra: the Navy bombarded Genoa and Ostend and the R.A.F. was active over Germany, while the *Luftwaffe* left this island almost undisturbed. But no one supposes that this lull is anything more than a pause before the enemy springs with renewed momentum. But where will he strike? Is he reconditioning his bomber-planes to deliver the mass-attack on our cities that may be the prelude to invasion? Will his tanks cross the Balkans to fall upon the Greeks? Or will Spain step forward into the militant van of the Axis? We do not know, but for any of these moves and even for all of them together we must be prepared.

In Libya an astonishing campaign reached a climax as startling as the opening battle fought two months ago on Egyptian soil. The Italians allowed our main forces to occupy the provincial capital of Benghazi virtually without opposition, while their army of 16,000 men set out on the long trek over the single coast road to Tripolitania. By forced marches over desert tracks our mechanised column anticipated the retreating enemy, lay in wait for him round Soluch and compelled him after a two days' battle to capitulate. While the Italians are said to have fought harder in this engagement than in any other, the fact seems to be that they surrendered to a British force which they out-numbered in men and tanks by five to one. The province of Cyrenaica will now be organised under General Wilson as military governor. There is no hint of what we intend to do with it eventually: its Arab population, always backward and decimated by Graziani's cruelties, is hardly capable of taking charge of its future. Nor can we guess whether General Wavell will now press on across the forbidding desert of Syrte to capture Tripolitania: with naval aid the thing could be done, for this enemy can offer little resistance. On the other hand, the Greeks may soon need our help at Salonica. From Eritrea and Abyssinia there is little to report, save that the R.A.F. has been active and that two fresh thrusts have been made near the Red Sea coast from the Sudan into Italian territory.

While we were all watching the Western Mediterranean with some anxiety, the navy has reminded us that it is still master of that threatened sea. The bombardment of Genoa by two capital ships, while the Fleet's air-arm bombed the railway juncture at Pisa, demonstrated Italian impotence. But it may have been intended to disorganise the port which the Germans would use if they ever try to send a force to occupy Bizerta. It seems clear that their dive-bombers, after a first success in the Sicilian Channel are no longer a serious menace to our Fleet. As Mr. Churchill told us on Sunday, ninety out of 150 of these craft were destroyed in one attack on Malta.

We have next to fit into the complicated pattern the story of the German political initiative that failed. For the time being the Nazis have failed to impose their French Quisling on Vichy. Exactly what happened last week while Admiral Darlan ran to and fro between Vichy and Paris we do not yet know. It is probable that Laval demanded reinstatement with full dictatorial powers over foreign and internal policy. Had he got these, he would have tried to use them to hand over the French Fleet with Bizerta to the Germans. Marshal Pétain offered him instead a decorative post: he should be minister without portfolio in an inner council so composed that all real authority would belong to Admiral Darlan and General Huntziger. This Laval refused. Thereupon Marshal Pétain took a decision. He got rid altogether of that minor Quisling, M. Flandin, and made Admiral Darlan his Grand Vizier and successor. This cannot be called a victory for democracy, for the Admiral has not even a shadowy claim to be regarded as the choice of the popular will. But it is a set-back for Germany. So long as the Nazis acquiesce in the rejection of their nominee Laval, the French Fleet and Bizerta are safe. But no one who has watched Hitler for long will suppose that this is the end of the story.

A new chapter in this Mediterranean drama opened when it was announced that General Franco and Señor Suñer are about to meet the Duce on the Franco-Italian frontier. It is expected that they will also call on their old friend and political sympathiser Marshal Pétain; at a different moment of history it would be assumed that this was

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merely a visit of courtesy. But to-day it occurs with Hitler's assent, if not at his instigation. What is the purpose of this meeting of the Latin bloc? There are several guesses. It may be that Mussolini will ask for the repayment in some form of the debt of honour that Fascist Spain owes to Fascist Italy. Precisely how? Franco might be asked to bottle up the Western Mediterranean by closing the Straits of Gibraltar, presumably with German support. He might also embarrass the recalcitrant French by pressure on Morocco. Nothing, so far as we know, suggests that Franco is more disposed to risk belligerency than he was. The other current guess, that the Duce will ask Franco to negotiate a separate peace for him may be dismissed as wishful thinking. In sentiment, a Latin-Catholic block, composed of Mussolini, Franco and Pétain, is conceivable and may even exist in the dream-world of aspiration, but can it mean anything actual while the power of the Nazis remains intact?

At the other end of the Mediterranean we may be on the eve of a new phase. Mr. Churchill in his broadcast on Sunday prepared us for a German march into Bulgaria. The belief that it is imminent accounts for the withdrawal of our embassy from Rumania. That country could be attacked from the air, if it becomes the base for a Nazi drive to the South. The evidence shows that Hitler is rapidly mobilising troops and material for the occupation of Bulgaria. Bulgarian sentiment is divided, for the officers are pro-German, while the peasant mass is still traditionally Russophile and the Communist Party exerts a good deal of influence in the villages. But Russia seems unlikely to run any risk in vetoing a German move. It is a fact that she has suggested a pact of mutual assistance, but no one is sure that this gesture of sympathy ever amounted to an offer of military aid. In any event King Boris and Professor Filoff cling to their policy of inert neutrality: they will stand alone till they fall alone. The Turkish press still threatens military intervention if Greece should be attacked, and no one doubts that the inclination of the Government will be to defend the approaches to the Straits, but it is fatally easy for a neutral in such a situation to postpone action and hope for the best.

Cabinet Appointments

Looking back on the story of the last war we see that the ideas, the capacity and the outlook of the few men at the top were of supreme importance, but that the personalities and abilities of other Ministers were of far less importance than those of men who only ranked as Civil Servants. The men who reorganised Government departments were seldom the old-established Civil Servants; they were rather newcomers of the calibre of Sir William Beveridge, Mr. Frank Wise, Mr. E. H. M. Lloyd and Sir Arthur Salter. Some of these men are now at length back in similar positions, bringing their wealth of experience and knowledge to the job of reorganisation. With this story in mind we may be rather less critical of some of the new appointments to the Government. With Mr. MacDonald's departure to Canada Mr. Ernest Brown moves to the Ministry of Health. No one has ever suggested that Mr. Brown was an unqualified success at the Ministry of Labour which Mr. Bevin declared on November 27th he had found in chaos. But Mr. Brown may well do better at the Ministry of Health; he has energy and real knowledge of the social problems that he will be required to handle. Mr. Tom Johnston is a natural appointment as Secretary for Scotland, and amongst the other names we notice with satisfaction that Mr. Tomlinson goes to a Ministry where his special knowledge will find full scope. The oddest appointment is that of the Duke of Norfolk. It cannot be thought that he adds anything to the strength of the team which is now supposed to be organising British agriculture to the highest point of efficiency, and one must assume that the Duke's appointment is considered of importance rather from the point of view of national unity than from that of feeding the nation. As head of the Catholic aristocracy, Earl Marshal and Chief Butler of this realm, the inclusion of the Duke in the Government will be popular in Roman Catholic circles and amongst the well-born. It may not be particularly unpopular in some Labour circles.

The Future of the Colonies

Lord Moyne might prove to be a sensible choice for the Colonial Office. He was first associated with Colonial affairs, when he was sent on a financial mission to Kenya in 1932, but it is with his work as chairman of the West Indian Royal Commission that his name is most closely connected. Though the report of this Commission was suppressed, its recommendations were published about a year ago, and received general approbation for their breadth of vision and human approach to the unhappy problems of the West Indies. The gist of the recommendations was that £1,000,000 should be given each year for West Indian development, and that the islanders should be granted true democratic representation in their Governments. These proposals were linked up with the passing of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act last May, and Lord Moyne must certainly have been connected with the formulation of this Act and the very progressive statement of policy which preceded it. The Act has been acclaimed as a milestone in British Imperial history. It boldly accepted the British tax-payers' responsibility to secure a reasonable standard of well-being for Colonial peoples, and granted £5,000,000 a year for ten years as free gifts to the Colonies for social services and development projects. About £1,000,000 of this was to go to the West Indies, as Lord Moyne suggested. Nearly a year has elapsed and little of these plans has been realised. Difficulties of supply are pleaded as the excuse for holding up development projects needing imported equipment. The Comptroller of Development for the West Indies has been appointed and is on the spot, but he is still "studying conditions" and has warned us against the expectation of immediate results. On the question of political reform, a first step was taken only a few weeks ago, when a new Constitution was announced for Trinidad. But this Constitution is so feeble an affair that, far from welcoming it, informed opinion is only fearful that similar instalments of "democracy" might be extended to the other islands. It was Lord Moyne, let it not be forgotten, who advocated a real extension of democracy to the West Indies. Will he, as Colonial Secretary, be content with this travesty of his ideas?

The Humbug of Finance

Our economic thinking is still bedevilled by what Mr. Keynes calls the humbug of finance. For example, the confusion about the real and the money cost of the war still goes on. Lord Simon was continuously guilty of the fallacy when Chancellor, and the *Times* has now repeated the error. "It was very properly decided long before the outbreak of war," says the *Times*, "that it would not be just to this generation to ask them to sustain the whole burden." It may have been properly decided, but the decision was futile. It cannot be too often emphasised that the division between taxation and borrowing has nothing whatever to do with the real burden of the war. If gifts or loans in kind from abroad are ignored all the real sacrifice is being made *now* by the people of this country. The labour and steel which go into a gun are going in now, and that labour and steel are being diverted from other potential uses. Whether the gun is paid for by taxation or out of borrowing makes no difference. The future generation will be no better or no worse off however the financial allocation is made. There will be a different distribution of money income inside the community, but its real position will be unaffected. The sole reason for not raising the whole money cost by taxation is the problematical effect on incentive during the war. The chief loss to posterity is the absence of additions to capital equipment during the war years. They will inherit fewer houses, fewer cinemas, fewer factories, but that will happen whether wartime borrowing covers 0 per cent., 10 per cent., 50 per cent. or 100 per cent. of the money costs. Similarly the collection of money now from property owners under the War Damage scheme will have no effect either way on our capacity to rebuild after the war. Our capacity to reconstruct will depend solely on the labour and equipment available to work at the end of hostilities, and those physical factors will be the same whether the internal national debt is £10,000 millions or £20,000 millions. Germany was financially bankrupt in 1923 and in 1940 she was in a position to wage a colossal war. What she did for warlike ends she could have done for peaceful aims. If we do not lose too many lives and too much capital equipment we shall be able to produce real goods on the same scale as before. In fact, if we refuse to tolerate unemployment we can do better.

Economic Notes (*from Our Industrial Correspondent*)

Critic pointed out last week how disastrous it would be if the problems of reconstruction were left to be handled on departmental lines, with each department making plans for the matters falling directly within its sphere of action, and each taking the utmost care not to tread on the toes of the others. For, along those lines, nothing can possibly happen except a futile attempt to put things back pretty much as they were. Each department will be bound to take the old social structure as a starting point, and to act on the assumption that it has to respect the old private rights; and the result will be that instead of a new Britain we shall get a sham-antique Britain, as out of place in the post-war world as the Tory statesmen who will try to make themselves the rulers of it—of course, with the Labour men loyally co-operating in the name of national unity. This is most obvious when one considers the rebuilding of our bombed cities; for there the absurdity of putting the old muddles back is most undeniable. But it really applies to almost every aspect of reconstruction.

* * *

Some people, I know, argue that it is premature to begin tackling such problems as these now. But they are being tackled, necessarily, in the War Damage Bill; and if that Bill goes through without anything being said about the future ownership of the land, and this public ownership is proposed at a later stage, a cry will go up that the State is breaking faith. Moreover, planning is going to be a difficult matter, and is bound to take a long time; and unless we get the plans made, literally, years before they have to be carried out, there will be no end of a muddle. We ought to be getting ready now to turn over a vast quantity of labour from munition-making to building the very moment the war ends; and, if we do that without advance plans of what and where we mean to build, the only course open will be to rebuild on the old sites, and to use the existing authorities and contractors as agents. I am convinced that regional and not local authorities will be needed to take charge of the work within a general national plan, and that the State itself ought to organise the supply of all the essential materials (in order to prevent a price-ramp and reduce costs), and ought further to create regional Building Corporations to undertake a large part of the actual work of construction.

* * *

All this, important as it is, is only one aspect of the reconstruction problem. The sorts of houses we shall want, and the places where we shall want them, depend on such factors as the future location of industry, the age of retirement and the size of the pensions granted to the old or disabled, the existence or absence of a system of family allowances, and in general the income structure of the new society for which we propose to build. Houses last so long that it will be disastrous if they are built in the wrong places, or of the wrong sorts in relation to the future needs of the people. Anyone who is to plan post-war Britain must start from a general notion of both industrial and social structure as they are likely to be.

* * *

Can Arthur Greenwood convince the country that he is the man for a job of this order? If so, he must display qualities very different from those which he revealed while he was Chairman of the Production Council. In that capacity, he showed no power to stand up to opposition, or to do more than receive the reports of a number of committees which were left almost wholly without co-ordinating control. Yet Greenwood used to have some conception of what planning means; and I can remember him during the last war, while he was at the Ministry of Reconstruction, full of excellent ideas which he would have enjoyed putting into effect if he had possessed the power. The fact that he has now been put in charge of reconstruction *because* the Cabinet does not take it seriously ought to stimulate him, if anything can, to give his critics the lie.

* * *

It is manifest that, if we are to rebuild our cities aright, we ought to plan them; and planning is inconsistent with rebuilding on the old sites or under conditions which will allow each owner of a patch of land to do with it what he wills, subject only to the negative restraint of local by-laws. After the last war, no big problem of rebuilding faced Great Britain; for air-raid damage was insignificant. But a large-scale problem did confront France, in the areas devastated by prolonged warfare. The French did rebuild largely on the old sites, and without adequate planning; and we shall be wise to profit by their mistakes in the towns of Northern France. The first thing to do, as was pointed out in a recent article in this journal, is to make the land public property, in order to get away from the irrationality of the existing surface ownerships, and so make possible a comprehensive planning which will not be affected by vested interests in the values of particular sites. Unless we do this, everyone whose land may be reduced in value by replanning will come clamouring for compensation, whereas everyone who profits by it will keep tight hold of the benefits. Whereas, if we nationalise the land, it will not matter if land values fall in one place and rise in another. Gains will offset losses; and no valid claims for special compensation will arise.

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THE TOOLS AND THE JOB

MR. CHURCHILL reserves his speeches to the nation for special occasions; when he spoke on Sunday it was to reveal that he had lost nothing of his old vivacity and gusto. It was a speech in which warnings were blended with congratulation, and in one brief sentence he made a remarkable declaration involving a vital issue of policy. He informed our American allies that Britain was confident of being able to win this war without the aid, now or at any forseeable time, of their man-power. This statement is inconsistent with former pronouncements of the Prime Minister, and it inevitably raises the most far-reaching speculations about the strategy of this war. Mr. Churchill, it may be said, was necessarily so concerned with the immediate and urgent need of "all help short of war" that he felt it wise to reassure those numerous people in America who fear the thought of another expeditionary force. Even so, the fact remains that by this statement Mr. Churchill has ruled out Britain's right to ask for American troops. The result of this plain statement may be to remove some of that emotional conflict that confuses and embitters discussions of these issues to-day in the United States just as it confused and embittered them in Britain in the period before the war. The American press greeted Mr. Churchill's speech with enthusiasm, and the United States is now likely to display a new unanimity and concentration in providing—to use Mr. Churchill's euphemisms—"the tools" while we do "the job."

A statement of this importance can scarcely have been made by a British Prime Minister at such a time as a mere matter of tactics and without consideration of its further implications. If the reinforcement of American man-power is held to be unnecessary, on what factors, military, economic or political, is Britain relying for victory over an enemy whose troops must at least outnumber hers by two to one? We take it that Germany can place in the field about ten million men, while even if British man-power is mobilised to an extent that endangers production, five millions must be about the limit of her armed forces. Some of Germany's troops must be dispersed to hold conquered territories, while others must watch her Eastern frontiers. Britain must make similar, if smaller, deductions. The Italians, if they remain in the war at all, cannot be reckoned as first-line troops. It is doubtful whether they are now to be considered an embarrassment or a subsidiary force able to relieve German troops from non-combatant duties. But the most cursory glance reveals that on the score of man-power alone, Britain must dismiss at once the thought of an ambitious Continental offensive against such odds. Germany occupies a central position with good communications radiating in all directions, which means that with little delay she should be able to throw a superior force against any British army of invasion. Numbers are not decisive in modern warfare: but it is hardly likely that we can greatly surpass the Germans in mechanisation. It may be argued that the superior air-power on which we are counting, when we receive all the "tools" America can make, will enable us to disorganise German industry and communications to a degree that we have not ourselves experienced while we were the weaker of the two in the air. Or it may be predicted that our blockade will bring about in the third year a crippling shortage of oil and other military materials. These may be important factors, but can we reckon on them with such confidence that we can rely on such factors alone to outweigh a superiority of two to one? Clearly not.

There remains the possibility of "amphibious" warfare on which some expert students of military history rely. Undoubtedly it presents opportunities which we should be the last to minimise. A daring and ingenious use of sea-power may enable us to conduct some victorious offensives on land in relatively isolated fields, but not in the main European area. The Libyan campaign is a perfect model for such operations. We can imagine several similar exploits—apart from mere raids. Norway and Sicily are possible objectives, and with Turkish help the Balkan Peninsula might become such a field. Some of us have had it in mind that if Franco should be dragged into the war, the Spanish Peninsula might play in Hitler's decline the part it played in Napoleon's. But that illustration brings us up against the limitations of this method. It is true that the exhausting Peninsular War helped to destroy Napoleon, but only because his main powers had first bled to death on the retreat from Moscow and then suffered a crushing defeat at Leipzig. In that war we had powerful allies. Again, in Spain, Wellington's expeditionary force, which never mustered more than 30,000 men, supplied the shock troops; but the Spaniards, gallant as always, were the main body of the armies that defeated Soult. But where in this war, even if the Turks should join the Greeks, have we the allies capable of another Leipzig? Nor have we as yet discovered the political dynamic that might rally the Spanish people behind a British vanguard. In short, from a daring and successful conduct of amphibious warfare we might hope to win some counters of real value, if our aim were to conclude a compromise peace, but we could not hope in this way to free Europe from the Nazi yoke. The ablest advocate of this strategy, "T124," in his book, *Sea-Power*, has been perfectly frank, for he scoffs at any such purpose and rejects the idea that we are under any obligation to rescue Czechs, Poles or even Frenchmen.

Here, surely, he puts the issue on ground that is both misleading and dangerous. For a peace that abandoned the Continent while Hitler dominates it would not merely leave the Poles and Czechs to their fate; it would also be a precarious truce which would last until Hitler had either undermined British independence or was ready for a surprise attack. We should not long survive against a solidly organised Nazi Empire.

No one has faced these problems with more courage or honesty than Mr. Churchill. Clearly he does not believe in a compromise with Hitler; clearly, on the evidence of his broadcast, he does not envisage a conquering offensive against a Nazi Europe. On what then does he rely for victory? Superior air-power and the slow aid of the blockade should play their part; the disillusion with Hitler in Germany and the detestation of the Nazis throughout conquered Europe assure us of potent allies when the time is ripe. The defeat of an actual attempt at invasion would do something to break the physical power of the German war-machine: alternatively the proof that he dare not attempt it would weaken German morale, give the opportunity to encourage discontent and revolt and make possible expeditions which are now impossible.

It would seem to follow—and it is here that Mr. Churchill gives us no lead—that everything should be done now not only to prepare against invasion but also to weaken this solidly organised tyranny from within. Eventual success demands two equally necessary conditions: (1) The more virile part of the subject populations must be ready to give our invading army active support and (2) a considerable part of the German people and army must at least acquiesce in the prospect of a British victory, if it does not welcome it. In brief, we have first to make our conception of freedom with order for Europe so attractive that some Frenchmen will fight for it, while some Germans in days of stress will rather lay down their arms than resist it; we have next to organise our propaganda, and our underground cadres which will sabotage, strike and eventually rise to aid our advance. As yet we have taken no significant step in the long slow effort of preparation, while we have done a good deal to prejudice our success. It was a bold and confident gesture to renounce the aid of an American army. History will applaud us, only if at the same moment we begin with method and imagination to recruit instead of it our European legions.

HEADING—FOR WHAT?

WITH all the increase in State control that has occurred in Great Britain since September, 1939, are we getting nearer Socialism? Or are we, on the contrary, heading straight for Fascism, of our own peculiar British brand? To all intents and purposes, the State, and not the private employer, now dictates the volume and character of output, not only in the war industries, but almost equally in those which provide for ordinary civil consumption. The State controls the supplies of all the essential materials of industry, the allocation of shipping space for imports, and, where it sees the necessity, the use of scarce kinds of machinery and labour. The State, using the banks as its instruments, can create money practically at will: it controls all foreign exchange and can direct the course of foreign trade. The State can order any workman to go and work where it wants him to work: it can requisition any factory or other building, or any stock of finished goods or parts, or indeed anything it pleases. The State, through the B.B.C. and the censorship controls the sources of information. Through its Regional Commissioners it has taken over many functions which used to belong to the sphere of local government. The State has power to shut people up without trial, to stop public meetings, and to put people on trial for a host of new wartime offences against itself. And finally, Parliament, under a Coalition Government of all the leading parties, now functions without an organised Opposition.

Are these the signs of an approach to Socialism, or to Fascism? The true answer is that they are in themselves neither, but conditions forced upon us by the necessities of war, and capable of being given either a Socialist or a Fascist turn. In part, they are just war measures, which will survive or not survive the war emergency according to the character of the social forces dominating the country at the end of the war. But another, and a vitally important, part of them consists of measures which will assuredly outlast the war, and become the basis of the new post-war social order, whoever wins, and whatever social forces rule Great Britain in the coming time.

It can be taken as certain that, in post-war Britain, there will be no return to capitalism of the old sort. Pre-war Britain was in a condition of industrial anarchy which will never be allowed to return. British industry was divided into three sectors—one governed by well-entrenched and privileged monopolies which had mastered the art of sustaining profits by the concerted limitation of output, with the State's help when it was needed for the coercion of recalcitrants; a second in sheer confusion, because it had not been able to take effective measures for the "rationalisation" of output on these lines; and a third, in which the demand was still expanding, able to carry on under *laissez-faire* conditions without resorting to restriction as an habitual policy. Only this third sector was in tolerable shape; and some of the industries included in it owed their expanding profitableness largely to protection from foreign competitors.

To the first sector belonged coal-mining, shipbuilding, iron and steel, chemicals, cement, and a number of other industries; to the second cotton, and indeed most of the textile trades, except artificial silk; to the third belonged the motor trades, artificial silk, electrical engineering, to a large extent building, printing, boot and shoe manufacture and the clothing trades, and a number of smaller new industries catering for an expanding consumers' market. It was plain that the industries in the second group were destined, if the existing trends continued, to pass over into the first—witness the Cotton Control Scheme that was on the point of being established when war broke out. Agriculture also belonged largely to the first group, and seemed destined to belong to it entirely before long. Railways and road passenger transport and shipping were also in the first group; and goods transport by road seemed likely before long to join them. Electricity supply, only partly ordered by the Central Electricity Board, was being dominated more and more by a few great generating concerns, which were buying up the smaller companies and making rings round the smaller municipal concerns. The distributive trades, having passed through a period of rapid expansion, were approaching a crisis; and projects for the creation of a monopoly by means of the licensing of shops were in the air. Even the industries belonging to the third group were by no means free from monopolistic influences. Artificial silk and electrical engineering were dominated by powerful combines; there were cries for the rationalisation of motor manufacture; and it was plain that any decline in demand would give the signal for further attempts to build up restrictive monopolies at the consumers' expense.

There can be no going back to this inherently vicious system of capitalist restriction. The nation that attempts, in the twentieth century, to carry on by such methods will either suffer crushing defeat in war, or become the victim of domestic revolution. Yet it is plain that capitalism, left to itself, will practise restriction more and more, as the surest means of maintaining profits, in every industry in which demand is either contracting or expanding only at the average rate, and even in some in which the expansion is exceptionally rapid. It is much easier, under modern conditions, to make high profits by monopoly than by competition; and in one industry after another the size of the typical business unit becomes so large as to make monopolies easy to arrange.

Under these conditions, only two possibilities are left—a State-directed Capitalism under which the State makes itself responsible for the distribution of the nation's economic resources in accordance with its conception of national needs, but leaves the capitalists to own industry and profit by the exploitation of labour—or Socialism. Of these two methods, the first is the Fascist alternative, as practised in Germany and, very much less efficiently, in Italy. In both these countries, this form of State-controlled capitalism has been employed as an instrument of aggressive national policy, leading to war. The great question is whether it could be applied, not for war, but for peaceful development—for, if it could, the possibility remains open that capitalism may survive the war, and that Fascism rather than Socialism, may establish itself in Western Europe, whoever wins the war, as the dominant economic system.

This cannot happen unless, without the spur of war to drive it on, capitalism can be purged of its restrictive habits. But can it be so purged, except under that impulsion? War, and preparation for war, are the only insatiable consumers of capitalist products: for everything, almost, except war goods, the price has to fall in order to increase the demand. Only an economy that treats need, instead of profit, as the criterion of worth-while production will go on, under twentieth-century conditions, passing out commodities up to the limit of productive capacity. It is, no doubt, possible to imagine a State, dominated by the idea of welfare, spurring on its capitalists to produce the maximum quantity of consumers' goods. But it is difficult to conceive what could be the political driving force behind such a State. If it were the people, why should they keep the capitalists to levy toll upon the product of industry? If it were any other class, why should that class take popular well-being as its objective?

It seems likely that the Fascist State can arrive, and maintain itself, in Great Britain only if this war ends in such a way as to begin a period not of peace but of preparation for further war. A patched-up peace, or rather truce, with Nazism would in all probability cause the extensions of State control which have been made to take on a Fascist character, and the invasions of our personal and political liberties to be maintained. If, on the other hand, we go through with the war to the end, and succeed in destroying the Nazi system in Europe, these very same extensions of State power, which would under other conditions serve as foundations for the Fascist State, can be used as the basis for a new Socialist order. The State control of industry can be transmuted into public ownership; the State control of finance can be used to bring about a better distribution of wealth; and the holocaust of obsolete institutions and practices can be treated as the opportunity for remaking society from its foundations. Rebuilding will be required on such a scale as to make it plain folly to set about restoring the property claims which war has reduced to a chaos.

The harder-won the victory, the likelier this outcome appears to be. It is true that the propertied interests are seizing every chance of consolidating their position with a view to the resumption of unfettered profit-making after the war. If the monopolies themselves become masters of the State during the war, if the popular controls and the machinery for checking and transferring power are undermined, then Democracy will be destroyed. The hold of the monopolies depends on their power over the State; and, if they lose that, they will only have been improving their property for the enjoyment of their heirs—the people. The question is one of power. The instruments of Socialism and Fascism are largely the same—for they are dictated by the modern conditions of production. The difference lies in the hands that wield these instruments.

A LONDON DIARY

THE bigger Blitz is certain and invasion is likely; they may use gas; carry your mask; stay put if the church bells ring; don't spread rumours; read our book of instructions; and much to the same effect. This is as it should be; Hitler will act with more speed and violence than anyone expects. The only remedy is to be ready for anything. So much for the public. But is the Government ready? That it is vigilant and determined I do not question. But there are a score of matters on which we need reassurance. Arrangements for adequate food storage and dispersal may now be reaching efficiency, but from all I hear transport is far from ready and dock clearance unsatisfactory. Many such questions have recently been raised in the House. I want to ask another. Has any policy been considered to prevent another "alien panic" such as occurred last summer? Mr. Morrison has done well on this subject and the Home Office was never keen on indiscriminate internment. Sir John Anderson was also handling the question of aliens in a liberal spirit a year ago. The worst trouble was lack of forethought which gave reaction its chance. Remember, too, that there are still chief constables and others in responsible positions who suffer from a vague notion that the alien as such is a dangerous character. It might be wise for Mr. Morrison to prepare to counteract these panicmongers. When warning us of the dangers of invasion he might do well to tell the public that full precautions have been taken to keep suspicious aliens out of the way, and that those who are free have satisfied the Government of loyalty and are to be relied upon in an emergency. He might remind the public of Mr. Peake's repeated statement in the House of Commons that the Home Office has no need to repent of considerate treatment of friendly aliens. I think it still holds good that not a single case has been reported of a "C" class alien having committed any serious offence which could be regarded as detrimental to the war effort of this country. If there are any aliens who are not interned and of whom the Government have reason to be suspicious, the time to make sure about them is now, and not when invasion actually begins. A Government statement on the position of friendly "enemy" aliens would serve a double purpose. It would help to prevent a recurrence of the mistakes of last year, and, scarcely less important, it would help to give practical proof that this is, indeed, a war against Fascism and not merely a national dog-fight.

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There were two remarkable bits of information in Mr. Churchill's broadcast. Neither of them were new to "official circles," but no hint of them had been let out to the public. When I heard a few days ago that nearly a hundred German dive bombers had been destroyed in the recent attack on Malta, I asked in astonishment why this had not been broadcast to the world. The answer appears to be that Mr. Churchill wanted to keep that tit-bit for his world broadcast. I cannot say I blame him. The implications are highly important. Malta was supposed to be almost indefensible; it is obviously extremely strong. More significant, we have a complete demonstration that one of the weapons on which Germany has most specialised and which was so appallingly effective in Poland and France can be rendered useless by good anti-aircraft batteries. I hear that men who took part in that massacre say that shooting down dive bombers is rather like shooting grouse—when you know how to do it and can forget the victims of your skill are human. About the other piece of news, Mr. Churchill was excessively modest. It is a sober fact—I could scarcely believe it when it was told me—that at the most critical period last summer, when this country was denuded of arms after the collapse of France and the withdrawal of the British force from Dunkirk, Mr. Churchill and General Sir John Dill planned the campaign in the Middle East and actually began at that moment to send out the material, including tanks, which General Wavell has used with such astonishing success in his swoop through the desert. The historian will search with some excitement for a record of the considerations that decided this piece of audacity; was it that Mr. Churchill thought invasion improbable and risked it, or that he was so sure of the capacity of the Navy and Air Force to stop it that he thought tanks and armoured cars would not be wanted? To put Egypt before Britain was in any case extraordinary; but in war it is only the result that counts.

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"How oddly things turn out!" said a friend of mine the other day. "I used to think of Lord Lloyd as the most dangerous fellow in the country and now I find myself regarding his death as a disaster." Not so odd really. Lord Lloyd was one of few men available whose energy and administration experience was equal to present demands. In this confused situation he was both valuable and dangerous. Experience with Lawrence in the last war and administrative posts since in the Far and Middle East made him an expert in fields where most of us are guessing. They also left him fanatically imperialist. He was one of the strongest supporters of the Prime Minister's unhappy policy in India. He was strongly pro-Arab, pro-Moslem and, most significant, pro-Mussolini. Or rather put it this way. He knew and admired Mussolini, and his natural authoritarianism warped his judgment of the strength of Italian Fascism and led him into the error of thinking that the Duce might be on Britain's side in the war which he foresaw with Germany. I remember wondering at his judgment when during the Spanish war he said in private that the Duce was the sort of rash fellow who might respond to our criticisms by starting the war against us. He had just been to see Mussolini and that, no doubt, affected his judgment. He showed the same set of prejudices when he wrote that deplorable little book about British war aims at the beginning of the war. He would have made England fight for Roman Catholicism and Latin-bloc Fascism. The religious side of Lloyd was obviously strong and genuine. His temper was dictatorial; Mr. Henderson was quite right to recall him from Egypt in 1929. And yet I believe that Lord Lloyd is at this moment a serious loss. He could look at facts. The first time I saw him he stood up stiff as a ram-rod at a Conservative convention and talked like a drill sergeant. During this war I have formed a different impression. He had learnt much and was one of the most intelligent and forward-looking Members of the Cabinet. If you had something to say about democratising the Services or about propaganda for a more equitable kind of world, Lord Lloyd was more inclined to listen and understand and, above all, to act effectively than some of his colleagues who professed more liberal sentiments. Which all boils down to saying that a man of character, who has energy, a clear head and administrative experience is often a better fellow to work with, even when you disagree fundamentally with him, than a sentimentalist who cannot get round to facing the situation and tumbles over himself in agreeing with your views, but has never thought out how to apply them.